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A GREAT WOMAN

BY JOHN E. BROWN




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A GREAT WOMAN

BY

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"THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT," "YEA, HATH GOD SAID?"
"THE SPIRIT FILLED LIFE," "THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT,"
"IF A MAN DIE," "SLIME PITS," "IN THE CULT KINGDOM,"
"THINKING WHITE," "THE FOUNDATION OF GOD,"
"UPON THIS ROCK," ETC.

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INTRODUCTION

DURING the past several years of my evangelistic work I have been delivering addresses to women only, under the general head of "The Ideal Woman." I have never specially liked the subject of the title under which I delivered this lecture. The word "ideal" has been often used, and so often abused, that the word, to multitudes, signified very little. Whatever women may have thought concerning the title of my lecture, or the subject, many seemed to feel that the message should be printed, and given a wider circulation. Probably a year or more ago I began to realize what an unusual character this Shunammite woman was, and out of this revelation came the determination to write a book about her—a book in which I would express my own ideals and convictions as to what constitutes real greatness in a woman's life.

No sooner had this decision been made than I began gathering the materials that were to go into the making of this book. Illustrations, clippings, and statistics were gathered from many sources and carefully filed away in marked envelopes, to await the time when this work should really begin. Last Tuesday, September 23, 1925, after a long walk in which I had worked out something of the distinct lines along which I would work in building these addresses, I re-

turned to my room, and at four o'clock I began writing. From that time until eight-thirty Friday morning, three days later, outside the time that I was speaking or dictating my correspondence, I sat over my typewriter. Without looking at a single clipping, incident, or list of figures, and with nothing before me but the Bible, I found that in three days of all but incessant writing I had finished the book, "A Great Woman" or "The Unnamed Queen."

I usually re-write my published talks two or three times before giving them to the public in print but I have decided to publish this series practically word for word as the messages came to my mind, and from my heart, in these days of writing. Probably this series will bear some of the marks of haste with which the work was done, but one thing sure, the messages will stand just as they came to me and just as I rushed them in print. These eight messages of thirty-two divisions of equal length, will appear first as a serial in our papers and magazines, and will probably appear in book form near the first of the year. We believe these messages are worthy the most careful reading of every woman and girl into whose hands they shall come, and we trust that out of such reading there will come the aspiration and the ambition to measure up to some of the ideals which dominated and beautified the life of the Shunammite woman, of whom God said, she is "A Great Woman."

Yours most faithfully,

Ruston, Louisiana,
October 3, 1924.

JOHN E. BROWN.

A GREAT WOMAN

TALK NUMBER ONE

PART ONE

"A great woman." II Kings, 4-8.

IN the fourth chapter of second Kings, and beginning with the eighth verse, there is a simple, interesting Bible narrative regarding a certain woman who lived in the beautiful city of Shunem.

On first reading there does not seem to be anything deeply significant or out of the ordinary about this woman. To be true, a child was born to her in answer to the prayer of the man of God, and that child later was raised from the dead in answer again to the prayer of the prophet, but beyond that there does not seem to be anything strikingly unusual either about this woman or the home in which she lived.

Let us look, briefly, at the story as it is given by the inspired writer. Shunem, we are told, was one of the most beautiful cities of that day and age, and located in one of the most beautiful spots.

In that city there lived a certain woman who evidently presided over the destinies of an unusual home. Elisha, the man of God, in passing

to and from his various fields of labor, often had occasion to pass this house.

To the husband the wife finally comes with the declaration, "I perceive that this is an holy man of God passing us continually," and then follows the suggestion that the house be enlarged to make room for this man of God.

Many a woman knows something of the excitement created and the controversy aroused when she has suggested the enlarging of her home to properly accommodate the needs of a growing family, and she knows better than anyone else what a storm would break if she were to suggest the enlargement of the home to make place for God's homeless servants, whether they be prophets, missionaries, pastors, or evangelists.

It seems, without objection and without controversy, the husband followed out the suggestion of this Shunammite woman, and the extra room was built, with its "bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick."

To the man of God the discovery comes that the tragedy of this home and the great sorrow of this good wife's heart is that no children have ever come into this home to bless it with their cry and laughter. For, as women know, in those days to be a wife and to be deprived of the privilege of holding in her own arms that which was the outflow of her own flesh was a tragedy indeed.

In answer to the prayer of the man of God, a wonderful baby boy had its entrance into that joyous, happy home, and upon that beautiful

babe this mother lavished the affections of her great, strong, noble, beautiful heart.

When grown to be quite a large lad, the child was one day yonder in the field following the men as they were gathering the ripened grain. With the hot, oriental sun beating down upon him, he fell on the earth, crying, "My head! My head!" To his mother he was carried in all haste, and in his mother's arms he lay and in his mother's arms he breathed his last.

Only those who have passed through similar experiences can realize how the heart of the devoted mother seemed literally to die with the death of her idol child. Dead! The boy in whose life the mother had lived and dreamed and planned through the wonderful years they had been together! Dead! The ambitions and aspirations and dreaming which had been all for him!

With a heart like lead, she carried the body of the child to the prophet's chamber and, with a tenderness accentuated and beautified even in death, the body was placed as if in sleep upon the bed where the man of God had often found sleep and its attendant blessings.

Then came the orders to the servants to saddle the beasts and to "drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee." And away toward Mount Carmel she rode, and toward the man of God.

Had not this wonderful boy been given the

first time in answer to the prayer of the man of God; and could not that same God hear and answer prayer again even though her child be dead?

As she rode, Elisha saw her coming, and commanding his servant, Gehazi, he said, "Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, 'Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with thy child?'" And the woman answered, "It is well."

At the feet of Elisha the broken story fell from her lips, and when Elisha realized what a calamity had overtaken the home and heart of this great woman, he ordered his servant, "Go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any man salute thee, answer him not again, and lay thy staff upon the face of the child." To the broken-hearted mother, however, this was not sufficient. "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth," she cried, "I will not leave thee."

The rest of the story is very familiar to all Bible students, how that Elisha journeyed with the woman to her home, and falling on the body of the dead child, prayed the prayer that brought life to the lifeless body, and the roses of health again to the cheeks of that boy whom the mother loved.

It is an interesting, suggestive narrative, with a whole gold mine of wonderful teaching underlying the surface story.

TALK NUMBER ONE—PART TWO

"Where was a great woman." II Kings 4:8.

In speaking of men God never deals in superlatives.

And what is true regarding His servants is true of His messages in general. Some of the most startling and terrible judgments God ever pronounced, as well as His most solemn warnings and admonitions, often fall with amazing directness and simplicity.

When Jesus Christ used the words, "Verily, verily," or "Behold," these words usually became the forerunners of the most wonderful truths that ever fell from His lips. When Christ cries, "Behold," the world can rest assured that when it stops to look there is something worthy of its gaze.

Now when it comes to the question of the human family in general, and men and women in particular, while God's estimate of the value of men is best found at Cavalry's Cross, yet He never indulges in extravagant language; nor did Jesus Christ, when it comes to speaking of any individual. Nowhere in the message which God gave, can man find Divine authority for this modern attempt to enthrone or deify man.

Of Job God says he was "perfect and upright, and one that feared God," while of Moses, the most wonderful character of all history, God's estimate is, "There arose not a prophet since in

Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face," and again of Cornelius, "A devout man, and one that feared God."

As we study the lives of the outstanding characters of the Word of God, both men and women, we search in vain for any extended laudation or special commendation written by the hands of inspiration, concerning any of them.

Probably the most extravagant language used regarding any man or woman in all sacred history is the declaration, the most significant declaration, found here concerning this Shunammite woman. God says of this woman, "Elisha passed to Shunem, WHERE WAS A GREAT WOMAN."

Here stands a woman who, like Melchizedek, is "Without mother, without geneology, having neither beginning of days nor end of life," so far as the recorded story of her life goes.

As we read over this simple narrative we are inclined to feel that whatever of truth concerning this woman is revealed here in this simple story, it does not justify the declaration, or designation of her greatness. One does not study this character long, however, until the realization comes that, buried here—without name—is one of the outstanding characters of the world's history.

For several years I have been delivering an address under the general head, "The Ideal of the outstanding and striking characteristics of this Shunammite woman, but not until within

recent years, and all but recent months, have I come to realize what a wonderful character shines out from this Old Testament page.

We often become most enthusiastic and most extreme in the commendations and laudations of those whom we greatly admire or genuinely love, and often our laudations are far beyond the actual facts, as God knows these facts!

When, by the hand of inspiration, God points us to Cornelius as a "devout man" we can rest assured that Cornelius is devout, and when God points us to Job with the declaration, "perfect and upright," we can mark it down that Job is perfect and upright. And when God points us to Moses as one "whom the Lord knew face to face," we can mark it down God knew Moses face to face. And when God points us to this Shunammite woman, saying, "A great woman," we can mark it down that here is a great woman.

There are certain characters spoken of in the Word of God of whom we get only a passing glimpse, and what little we see is entirely sufficient. Demas is spoken of but three times in the Bible, and when, in the last instance, the sorrowful declaration fell from the lips of Saint Paul, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world," we feel that is sufficient, and we don't care to know anything further about him.

There are other characters, however, of whom we get a passing glimpse, and what little we see makes us hungry to see and know a great deal more. One cannot study the brief story found on

the Old Testament page regarding this Shunammite woman without finding himself wishing that he had books and books about her.

Since God did not see fit to give us the extended story of this woman whom He designates as "A great woman," it is ours to build our book out of whatever of truth God flashes out to us from the simple, gripping narrative, briefly given on the Old Testament page.

And just here is the wonder and glory of God's blessed Book. As we study this character we literally find that God has written a great Book regarding this outstanding character, for immediately underlying this simple narrative, for those who have eyes to see, there are literally many books, and books that are so plainly written that one wonders why all this was not visible or readable the first time the narrative was read.

TALK NUMBER ONE—PART THREE

"And she constrained him." II Kings 4:8.

It has been claimed that women as a class have deeper convictions and clearer conceptions of spiritual things than men. I doubt seriously if that statement is true today.

Amongst evangelists everywhere there is the conviction that women, increasingly so, are becoming indifferent to God's appeal for the surrender of their lives in consecrated, consistent, fruitful, Christian living.

Whatever the facts, however, regarding women as a class, one thing sure, there are some women who are blind to every spiritual beauty, deaf to every spiritual appeal, and dead to every spiritual emotion or conviction.

As Elisha passed and repassed the home of the Shunammite woman there came the settled conviction to this woman's heart that this was a man of God who passed her home, and that she would do honor to God, honor God's servant, and honor herself by making a place for him when passing that way where he might rest in quiet and peace.

Back of practically every great character of the world's history there has stood a consecrated, thoughtful, and unselfish womanhood, and, in most instances, it has been a great mother who has given to the world every great son.

By the ancients the greatness of Moses was attributed to his great mother. Every mother can understand something of the love and devotion which went into every act of the deft and delicate hands that whipped into reality the little ark that was to carry the body of her precious babe. And what a fascinatingly beautiful name the mother of Moses had—God Thy Glory.

And Hannah, the mother of Samuel,—what a tender, beautiful story centers there! When one hears the grand old prophet, with the chilly hand of death feeling for his heart-strings, crying to the nation Israel, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you," one cannot help but believe that that stalwart giant

who stood as one of God's greatest prophets was but the glorious culmination of a mother's consecration, a mother's love, and a mother's prayer.

One cannot but be thrilled as he reads the story of Elizabeth, the mother of John, and the wonder and admiration thus stirred is deepened into a delicate reverence and adoration when he reads, just a little further on, something of the simple, sacred story of Mary, the mother of our Lord.

Catholics, unquestionably, swing to unreasonable extremes in their worship of the mother of Jesus, and probably this accounts for the fact that the Protestant world swings too far to the other extreme and, as a result, fails to pay the mother of our Lord the homage, reverence and devotion which are due her.

And just as it is true that back of every great character of the world's history there is a great mother, it is also often true that some of the darkest pages of sacred and profane history are made dark through the weakness or wickedness—the wiles or guiles—the trickeries or treacheries, of designing women.

Cain was the son of the sinning Eve; Esau was the son of a scheming Rebecca; Jezebel was the wife of an idolatrous Ahab, and the murder of the just man, Naboth; while Delilah sent to a tragic death, eyeless, loveless, pathetic Sampson.

It was through the lure of woman that godly David, who was "A man after God's own heart," fell to the lowest levels of crime; and through the licentiousness and treachery of Herodius that

John the Baptist lost his head; and probably the open, flagrant immoralities of the painted wretches of the streets of Rome that Demas, the co-worker of Saint Luke and Saint Paul, was seduced from love and loyalty to his Lord to turn his back upon those with whom he had been associated in the work of God.

There are no extremes of goodness or badness—love or hate—devotion or disloyalty—vice or purity, to which women do not swing. Down through all the centuries of human history there have flowed two great rivers—one the river of life and the other the river of death,— and both of these rivers had their inception in the hearts and minds of women.

There are no heights of sacrifice, suffering, and service to which women have not climbed, and there are no depths of deception, degredation, and demoralization to which women have not plunged.

When loyal to God and to the ideals that God placed before her, there is no creature this side of Heaven's gates more pure, more true, or more beautiful; and when she is thus true she is the most potential influence outside the power of God itself for the permanency, stability, and salvation of the nation.

When untrue to God, and untrue to the ideals that God has placed before her, there is no creature this side the gates of the lost world more pitiable, more tragic, more pathetic; and when thus untrue she is the most potential influence out-

side the power of the devil himself for the demoralization, degeneration, and the damnation of the nation.

It is said of the Shunammite woman that as Elisha passed her home she "constrained him to eat bread." And it is true of most women that they are constraining those with whom they come in contact, and are feeding them upon the bread of an ideal womanhood, or else upon the ashes of a burned-out love and a burned-out hope.

TALK NUMBER ONE—PART FOUR

"As oft as he passed by, he turned in thither."
II Kings, 4:8.

Between the opening pages of the Bible, where Eve, "The mother of all living," sat enthroned in pristine purity and beauty, and the closing pages, where Babylon, "The mother of harlots," exercised her disastrous, destructive sway, God has much to say about women.

We are often reminded, and truly so, that it was woman who was last at the cross and first at the tomb, and we may just as well also be reminded that it was woman who was first in temptation and last in denunciation.

There is a great deal of controversy throughout the nation today as to just what place woman is to occupy in the affairs of the world. Increasingly so, she is becoming the competitor of man in every walk, circle, profession, and vocation.

Some argue that the modern woman is God's ideal of womanhood, while others are just as insistent in teaching that modern woman is but the forerunner of a destroyed home life, with all the chaos that centers back in such destruction.

When one turns to the Bible to find there God's ideal womanhood, with the boundaries that God has set for woman's activities and woman's leadership, nothing is more plain than that the women of Bible history, who best served, were the women who occupied the exalted positions of faithful wives, devoted mothers, and efficient home makers.

Out of the Old Testament scriptures there come law, prophecy, song and faith, and these various agencies for the conservation and inspiration of the national hope and the national honor all center back in the hands and hearts of men.

Running back the line of law we find standing at the fountain head that grand old man, Moses. Running back the line of faith we find standing at the fountain head that grand old man, Abraham. Running back the line of prophecy we find as God's ideal of the true prophet that grand old man, Elijah. Running back the line of sacred songs we find standing at the fountain head that sweet singer of Israel, King David.

While it was Elizabeth who became the mother of John the Baptist it was John the Baptist who became the forerunner of the Christ, and while it was Mary who became the mother of Jesus it was Jesus Christ, God's "only begotten son," who became the world's Redeemer.

Again when Jesus selected those upon whose minds and hearts, and into whose hands there was to be committed the responsibilities of carrying his gospel to a dying world, every person chosen was a man. Not a single woman stands amongst prophets, priests, lawgivers, psalmists, apostles or disciples.

At the launching of the church on the day of Pentecost it was Saint Peter who was God's chosen spokesman to deliver God's message on that memorable occasion. Throughout the Acts of the Apostles—more properly called, perhaps, the Acts of the Holy Ghost—in every distinct call which the Spirit of God made, where a special service was to be preformed, it was upon man that the Spirit of God laid his hand.

Every book of the Old Testament scriptures was written by men, as were all the books of the New Testament, including the Epistles and the book of Revelation.

Now I am not trying to argue here that God does not call women to definite Christian service, both at home and abroad, for to argue so would be to argue against my own settled convictions, and against the facts of history where woman's unselfish service and holy achievements are so plainly written that a fool may run and read. The point I do argue is that all great denominations that have been true to the fundamentals of the Old Book and have flung their arms around the world, bearing life and salvation to all people, are organizations founded by men, just as it was

also true that, in both Old and New Testament scriptures, when God sought leadership, he sought it not amongst women but amongst men.

When we turn to the world today we find the whole nation being swept with various religious movements, independent of the church, and antagonistic to the church, and, strange to say, in a great many instances, movements that are headed entirely, and directed entirely, by women. In Theosophy, in Spiritism, in New Thoughtism, in Christian Science, with dozens of other similar movements it is a conglomerate or an agglomerate combination of doctrines, true and false, that end in controversy, confusion, and division.

Jesus Christ tells us in Matthew 13:32, that it was a woman who hid the leaven in three measures of meal, "Till it was all leavened." Remember that leaven, as used in the Word of God, is a corrupting influence and never an agency for purity or for life. Again, it was a woman who was admonished by St. Paul and warned, "I permit not a woman to teach nor to have dominion over a man."

When God would give the world a striking picture of the terrible agencies of destruction that shall rule the world in the last days of the present age, He gives us a picture of Babylon, the mother of harlots, and warns us that Babylon has become "A habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit."

Strange to say—and sad to say—in the several outstanding instances, including Mrs. Eddy, where

women have sought to usurp the place of leadership, and to rule over God's heritage, she has not alone brought to the world some strange doctrines, which she rides to the exclusion of fundamental truths, but back of her ambitions for leadership there are often the divorce courts and a wrecked home.

TALK NUMBER TWO

PART ONE

"A Great Woman" II Kings 4:8

THERE are two tremendous forces in every human life; one positive, and the other negative.

Probably this fact is better illustrated in electricity. In electricity there are two forces—positive and negative. If the positive is taken away from the negative the negative accomplishes nothing. If the negative is taken away from the positive the positive accomplishes nothing. It takes the two forces combined to make power.

In every human life—and certainly in every Christian life—these two forces, termed “negative goodness” and “positive righteousness,” are found. In the life of the Shunammite woman, as in the life of all other great women, these two forces—intermingled, harmonious, potential—were evident.

The Shunammite woman, without controversy, was negatively good. And one does not read the brief story of her life as given by inspired hand without a realization that she was also a woman of positive conviction—or a woman who was positively righteous.

Goodness alone does not constitute a Christian experience. To honor God, build character, and

bless the world, one must be something more than just "negatively good."

To be true, to be a Christian—even on the lowest level of the spiritual life—one must turn wholeheartedly from that which is evil; and that fact cannot be emphasized too far. Side by side with that fact, however, we must bring men and women to realize that to be a Christian means not only to "cease to be evil"—they must also "learn to do good." And the doing of that which is good is just as essential as the quitting of that which is evil.

The highest conception that some church members have of the Christian life is that of simply abstaining from every appearance of evil, and on the ground that they do not do the things a Christian should not do they deceive themselves into believing they are therefore the highest type of a saint.

I recall that in a certain city of the West at the conclusion of my address, to women only, on "The Ideal Woman," a woman came rushing to the front, hand raised, and crying, "I am that ideal woman about whom you have talked." Now, as soon as I looked at this dear sister I knew there was a mistake somewhere. Her hat was on crooked, the powder was on in spots and streaks, and she looked like an oversized umbrella, half raised. That she was the ideal woman she frankly admitted, but that she really was the woman about whom I had talked was a question for serious doubt in my own mind.

I waited for the excited sister to express herself, and she assured me and the interested skeptical women standing by, that she laid claim to being that long-sought woman on the ground that she had never danced, played cards, gone to theatres, or served drink in her home.

I might have informed the modest, unassuming, excited soul that the post in the tabernacle near which she sat had never done any of these things, and neither had the bench on which she sat, and yet I wouldn't feel, by any stretch of my imagination, that the center post or the bench could lay claims to being anything but an ideal post or an ideal bench.

Certainly women must be made to understand that to be Christians we must not only deny ourselves of those things that sap our spiritual strength, blur our spiritual vision, and make our lives a hissing and a by-word to the sinner on the street; but we must also be made to realize that it is just as un-Christ like to sit around day after day in ignorance, indolence, and selfish ease as it is un-Christlike to dance, play cards, or even drink.

Years ago, while I was in a meeting in one of the cities of Virginia, a very prominent young society matron was saved. Her conversion created quite a stir in the social circle in which she moved. Some of her friends were serious and commended her; others made it a joke and predicted it was nothing but an emotional spasm that would pass away in a very short time. One year later, on

the day this young woman was a year old religiously, she wrote me a very wonderful letter, and this much of that letter made a deep impression on my mind.

She said, "For one year I have lived a Christian life. During that time I have done none of the things that I renounced in my conversion. More, I have had no desire for those things. But when I turn and look toward the high ideals which I hold for a Christian womanhood, I come so far short of those ideals I sometimes almost give up in despair. Possibly, after all, it is not best that we reach our ideals this side the grave, for if we did, then nothing would be ideal and we would have nothing toward which to climb."

Now this young lady did not say so, but I will add that if the time ever does come when we attain to our ideals, and there is nothing higher toward which to climb, deterioration and disintegration will be the inevitable results.

Around us and over us and above us God places these winged things that call to us and beckon us and allure us, and the more distinct these voices are, and the more clearly these heights are seen, the more dangerous it is for any woman to trifle with God or be disobedient to the call of these ideals.

The woman of the Shunammite type is possessed of vast possibilities for good or for evil. If obedient to the voice of God and true to her ideals of womanhood, there are no heights of Christian living or service to which such a woman cannot

attain; but if disobedient to the voice of God she may very easily, through repeated failure, become so disgusted with herself that she will turn and fling herself in the opposite direction, to plunge to every excess of spiritual, moral, and physical ruin.

TALK TWO—PART TWO

"An so it was"— II Kings 4:8

This Shunammite woman—this "Great Woman"—who becomes our ideal in the building of these messages, was a woman with a definite program."

It is probable that much of the unrest, unhappiness, and disaster of the home life today comes through the fact that multitudes of women have no particular goal nor set program about which to intelligently build their lives.

The home is the center of the community, state, and national life and there women can build more permanently and more effectively than anywhere else on earth. It is not alone true that it takes "A heap o' Living" to make a home, but it takes more tact and more ingenuity and more patience and more love and more hard work than is required in the building of any other institution on earth.

The homes of some women are just as systematic as a whirlwind and just as orderly as an Irish rebellion. And when such conditions prevail in the home it isn't to be wondered at that the

husband seeks out a club downtown in which to spend his evenings, and the children go jazzing to perdition.

Other women swing to the other extreme and the house is kept so orderly and so systematic and so immaculate that the men of the house feel they ought to remove their shoes at the door and never talk while in the house above a modified whisper.

Some homes are nearly as attractive as the morgue, and husband and children are just as enthusiastic about the "dear old home" as they would be about the cemetery at the mid-night hour of a stormy night. The home life is either the biggest success in the world or the biggest failure, and to make it a success the woman who presides over the destiny of that home must be a home-maker in the highest sense of the word.

The mother's life is a life of constant sacrifice. From the hour when she surrendered her name to assume the name of the man she loves until the body is placed to rest in the silent city of the dead, her service to her home, to her loved ones, and to the world, practically means a service of blood.

And just here the old saying, "He who gives gets," is certainly clearly demonstrated, for "Give, give, give" in the mother's life—from mind and heart and hand—literally means, "Live, live, live." No one knows more truly than does the mother that happiness does not come through indulgence, but that happiness comes through sacrifice.

Not only is it true that the best fruits are upon the mountain side, and women must climb to enjoy them, but it's also true that the only life that lives while ceaseless ages roll is the life that is poured unselfishly into the life of humanity.

Just this lesson our modern "flappers" need to learn. If happiness comes through indulgence then the poor unfortunates of the underworld, who have denied themselves nothing, would be the happiest people in the world. One need only look into the faces of these lost people—lost to God, lost to the church, lost to home, lost to honor, lost to decency—to realize that these poor unfortunates are the most miserable characters this side of hell.

Multitudes of our young women today are inclined to look with more or less of contempt upon the solemn responsibilities and sacred relationships of home and motherhood. This fact connected with the further fact of the excesses of worldliness and selfishness into which they plunge, leaves its tell-tale marks upon their bodies, minds, and souls.

One does not have to be a close student of human nature to realize that some potential, insidious, demoralizing influence is at work in the lives of our young women today, nor does one have to be a very close observer to realize that multitudes of girls in this day are showing marks of age before they are scarcely out of their "teens."

Faces today of girls who are not long out of

their "teens," that ought to bear the blush of modesty and bouyant health, are often tired, worn, and sad, and while from these sets and circle there comes a shout of laughter and of song, is it often a joyless mirth and a joyless song.

The devotee of pleasure does not live. The Word of God says, that the woman "who liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." And how terribly true this is only God can know. What an awful thought that in the gay rounds of the society world, where beauty parades itself in all the pomp and splendor and extravagance that money can command, that in all and through all and over all nothing lives but death. With bodies bathed and scented and clothed and painted, these women are nothing but bones in the valley if death.

Probably no woman does greater violence to life than the devotee of pleasure. For, for whatever purposes God created us, God certainly did not create us to spend the few hours of life's little day in frolic, fun and foolishness.

This Shunammite woman—this beautiful woman of this beautiful home in the center of the "city beautiful"—lives today and will live while ceaseless ages roll because she lived while she lived and served in the larger things that make for honor, permanency, righteousness, and eternal life.

Every line of the all too few verses which we have concerning the life of this great woman

carries evidence unquestioned that this Shunammite woman was a woman with a program, and that unselfishly, intelligently, and continuously, day by day, she built about that program.

God had a room in her home, as He had first place in her heart, and it's probably true that not only Elisha, the man of God, but every one who entered her home was privileged to "eat bread." And we do not speak here of the bread that perishes, but rather of that bread of inspiration and exhortation which only men and women who have seen God face to face can put into the hands and hearts and souls of others.

TALK TWO—PART THREE

"As oft as he passed" II Kings 4:8

The regal surroundings of the King's palace make a tremendous appeal to the average mortal."

Doubtless, all classes of people, high and low, rich and poor, have some day been possessed with a desire or a passion to see inside the King's palace, and to look upon the pomp and splendor and luxury which centers there.

Probably nowhere does the strength and beauty of this Shunammite woman stand out more distinctly than just here. In that day the prophet commanded even the throne, and ordinarily whatever the prophet requested was readily granted by the king or by those who sat in seats of authori-

ty. Elisha doubtless stood close to the king and whatever Elisha asked the king would do.

It was an unusual honor—distinct, fascinating, intoxicating—which Elisha, the man of God, offered to confer on this Shunammite woman; for in return for the unselfish service which she had rendered to God's servant, Elisha offered to place her in the royal circle—"Wouldst thou be spoken for to the king?"

This introduction into the king's court would have meant a recognition that comes to few women in all of a nation's history and one does not need to speculate or even guess as to the type of woman who would brush aside such proffered recognition with an answer that was immediate and final—"I dwell amongst my own people."

While society—whether that which centers in a king's palace or that which resolves itself back into a boarding house type of "aristocracy"—is ordinarily a side door to mental moral, and spiritual oblivion, yet nevertheless, thousands of women would readily sell their birthright for one mess of social parade and social palaver.

Every community knows something at least of a godless double-chinned, highly-painted, jazzing, chattering type of the social nonentity which parades the streets, haunts public places, and chases fads; but not every community realizes that these poor, misguided, would-be butterflies are but cheap imitations of the high-fliers who flutter like moths about the king's palace or the king's throne.

Some women are more afraid of the funny displeasure of some old double-chinned, bell-wether of a flea-bitten society than they are afraid of the judgement of God, and literally make greater efforts to be recognized in the pest house of their unsanctified and godless activities than they do to be recognized in the eyes of God and the angels, or to build for themselves a name for sanity, consecration, and service.

I have seen women stack their deep soul hunger, with their God-breathed convictions, with the happiness of their home, their husband, and their children, upon the altar of a brainless, purposeless, prayerless, godless, blasphemous, wine-guzzling gambling, jazz-drunk bunch of social bacchanalians—there to sacrifice the whole to man-fear expediency and custom, not realizing that such sacrifices are sad enough to fling the angels into tears.

The Shunammite woman not alone showed her strength of character in refusing royal recognition but she also showed her wisdom and her good taste in the decision she made to live her life in her own sphere, loyal to her own convictions and true to God, her husband, and her home.

Great women live their own lives. Great women dress before their own mirrors. Great women do not fear to stand erect, to let their head rise above the clouds of social bigotry, social envy, and social strife. Great women do not creep or crouch or crawl or compromise in the presence of any woman or set of women on the face of the earth.

Too many women are only jellyfish in the tide of destiny or straws in the current of custom. Fear of others—a fear that some old godless bellwether of society may sneer or scoff or laugh—will spell out death to the individuality, spirituality, and personalty of any woman on earth.

I believe that God calls women to serve in many capacities and many fields, and nothing is more apparent than that God does bless women in many walks of public life, but, after all, the place where woman shines brightest and longest—the place where woman lives best and happiest—is back there in that wonderful palace called the home, and in those regal circles of wifehood and motherhood.

Had this Shunammite woman accepted the invitation to pass into queenly circles, or into the circles that centered about the king's throne, it is probable the world would never have heard of the woman of whom God said, "Look—A GREAT WOMAN."

"I dwell amongst my own people." said this great woman, evidently convinced that God did not call her to leave her home and her husband to seek recognition or fields of opportunity away from her own fireside. That this woman was negatively good is a matter beyond controversy, and here also the fact stands out that this woman was a woman of positive conviction, and that beyond her negative goodness she was also positively righteous.

There never was a time in the history of the

world when a strong, consecrated, godly womanhood was needed more than in this very day and age. The world needs women—strong women—women who in home and church and social set will dare stand four-square for Jesus Christ and the highest ideals of motherhood, and despite the sneers or ridicules of the little society wart whose ludicrous attempts to ape the big rich causes amusement in perdition, will dare to stand for those ideals that have made the American home.

TALK TWO—PART FOUR

"Let us make—" II Kings 4:10

Man undoubtedly was ordained of God to be the head of the house, as he is also the head of the church, the city, the state, and the nation.

While man is the head of the house it is the prerogative of a woman to become the neck, and the neck does sometimes turn the head, as well as hold up the head.

The Shunammite woman evidently had a death grip on the heart and mind and soul of the man whom she honored by the sacred title of husband—a death grip of love, loyalty, and confidence.

It has been my argument, settled and fixed, that the average woman who has a husband who trusts her and loves her can, through that love and trust, all but literally drive that husband to whatever accomplishment she may choose.

I do not mean by this that man is the weaker of the sex or that he has become the plaything of a woman's whim or woman's caprice, but I do mean to say that nothing actuates and demonstrates so effectively as a woman's love, and when the ordinary man has back of him the encouragement, the inspiration, and the determination of a loyal, devout wife, his battles are made easier, and his victories are the more sure.

Multitudes of men will be brave when a woman commands them to be brave, and multitudes of men will become cowards—shrinking, creeping, frightened things—if a woman commands them to be cowards. Multitudes of men are crowned among their fellows as brave successful men when, as a matter of fact, their success and their confidences have been inspired by the wonders of a devout, faithful wife, who, with heart as true as the needle to the north pole, stands back there in the shadows of the home.

Multitudes of men are woman-made, just as it is true that multitudes of men are woman-damned. Having assumed the responsibilities of wifehood and home-making, the Shunammite woman seemed to realize that her highest privileges and first duties centered back in the home, and to these privileges and to these duties she was determined to be true.

This home was a home where more people than Elisha were privileged to eat bread, and the bread upon which they fed in that house was often not made by human hands or seen by human eyes.

Multitudes of women who would not take first prize at a beauty show, or a second prize, or a third prize, are so loyal to God and so refined and so intellectual and so gracious that those who are privileged to enter their refined presence find the hours slipping away like moments.

Probably the life-size picture of this remarkable woman is found recorded in the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs where, by the pen of inspiration, we have the following description:

“A worthy woman who can find? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall have no lack of gain. She doeth him good and not evil all the days of life. She seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchantships; she bringeth her bread from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night and giveth food to her household, and their task to her maidens.

“She considereth a field, and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and maketh strong her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is profitable; her lamp goeth not out by night. She layeth out her hand to the distaff and her hands hold the spindle. She layeth out her hand to the poor; yea she reacheth forth her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household; for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh linen garments and selleth them, and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

"Strength and dignity are her clothing; and she laugheth at the time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and the law of kindness is on her tongue. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children rise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her saying: Many daughters have done worthily, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth Jehova, she shall be praised. Give her the fruit of her hands; and let her works praise her in the gates."

Not only is it true that nowhere in all the divine records was a woman called to usher in a new dispensation of truth or to expound and promulgate some new doctrine, but it was also true that she was never called to head any church or to exercise authority over the household of faith.

Again and again God gives us pictures of the queenly woman who serves in the sacred capacity of mother, wife, and home-maker—pictures that only the hand of an angel or the hand of inspiration could possibly paint. That God does call women in isolated instances, to teach, to preach, and to assist in the varied activities of the church is doubtless true but, while that is true, the fact still remains that in the tremendously responsible position of a home maker woman serves best and lives longest and enjoys most.

As it is true that back of every great man or woman there stands a great mother, it is also

true that every great nation is the product of its consecrated, godly homes. The home-builder is the nation-builder, and as long as the heart of the home rings true the heart of the nation will also ring true.

TALK NUMBER THREE

PART ONE

"A Great Woman."—II Kings 4:8.

IN our last message we discussed the positives of a great woman's life. Women can never become constructive agencies for good in the world unless they first think through their own problems, intelligently plan their own programs, and then resolutely set out to build.

And just here we would stop to emphasize the fact that one cannot build without first laying the foundations upon which the building is to stand. Positive righteousness, however strange the statement may appear on first reading, is the result, and not the cause. Underlying every constructive, positive, and deeply spiritual life, there is, of necessity, that foundational, fundamental something called negative goodness.

One cannot become positively righteous without first becoming negatively good. A righteous life is the outflow of a clean heart. When we ridicule the inactive, negative, goody-goody, so-called "setter" of the average church congregation, arguing that to sit about doing nothing, while the world cries in its darkness for succor and light, is as much unlike Christ as to dance, play cards, or drink, we argue correctly!

But just here is a danger. To insist that to do

nothing as a Christian is as much unlike Christ as to engage in the unsanctified activities of the godless is only half the truth, and a half-truth stressed too far may become the meanest sort of a lie. To be true, it is unlike Christ to be negative, inactive, and indifferent, while the world lies in darkness and sin; and yet, let us not forget that, after all, all spiritual activity and consecrated living are the culmination of negative goodness.

Until men and women know the rest of heart goodness, thus to become negatively good, they will never be able to deal with the unrest of a sin-cursed world through a service which heads up in positive righteousness.

The Word of God warns us that we must "shun the appearance of evil," and it further admonishes and exhorts that we "touch not, taste not, handle not." We are to "come out from amongst them," and not only stand as a separated people, but we are also to see to it that—under no circumstances and under no condition—do we "touch the unclean thing."

Before we can live "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," we must first "deny ungodliness and worldly lust." Before we can "take up the cross and follow" Jesus Christ, we must first "deny ourselves"—dying upon the cross, to be dead to the world, with its enticements and lusts. Before we can know the wonders of a service which is the outflow of the invitation, "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me," we must first understand the significance and the

possibility and the necessity of "come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

In other words, we must first "Come" before we can "Go", and we must first "Be" before we can "Do." Too many people play with Christianity, assuming some of its obligations and seeking to be identified with its functions, ready always to pass through some of its forms and ceremonies, without ever coming into vital contact with Jesus Christ, or without ever knowing, in the least measure, the power of His Spirit. In the blood of Christ many women, thank God, are washed white, while others, sad to say, have passed only through the tragedy or farce of church identification and church form, and in that sense have been only "white-washed."

Multitudes of women are enthusiastically positive in whatever church work they do, and yet—as paradoxical as it may sound—while they are the most active workers in the church they are the greatest liability the church has. These are the women who substitute work for worship, and who seek to justify their worldliness by the fact that they are the most active in the so-called "program of the house of God." They are not guides, to guide our boys and girls in the way of life, and they are not even guide posts, to stand pointing others to that way; but rather they are amongst those who say; "Lord, Lord," in the matter of church activity, but whose lives say, "Devil, Devil." so far as actual example and influence go.

To be true, just the act of denying ourselves of dancing, card playing, theatre going, wine drinking, and Sunday "skylarking" does not make us a fruit-bearing Christian. But over against that truth may be written the fact, in such large letters that a congressman can run and read, that until we abstain from the unsanctified pleasures which unsaved people believe God's people should not be mixed up in, we shall never be able to stamp immortal spirits with the solemnity and tragedy of being unprepared in the day of the final accounting.

The lines between the world and the church are often obliterated. Unsaved people, in increasing numbers, are asking, and with increasing sarcasm, "What do ye more than others?" Nothing is clearer today than the appalling fact that multitudes of church members live as the sinner lives.

These worldly women are unhappy as unsaved women are unhappy, and dependent—though members of the church—upon the same amusements, or the same indulgances, that women out of the church are dependent upon. In some communities only an angel possessed with the powers of omniscience could tell the difference in the daily conduct between the so-called "sinner" and the so-called "saint."

This "Great Woman"—this Shunammite woman, with high ideals and positive spiritual experience, was over all and under all and back of all, a woman who was negatively good. Not goody-goody, if you please, but a goodness that was

deep and pure and true, which culminated in making her a woman who—as a wife and mother—was as true to her husband, to her child, to her home, and to her God—as true as the needle to the North Pole.

One cannot become positively righteous unless one first becomes negatively good.

TALK THREE—PART TWO

“When He cometh to us.” II Kings, 4:10

The average woman “seeks not, like Delilah, to destroy.” Doubtless, in her best moments, the worst woman has desire to be pure and wholesome and helpful, and, with a chance, even now, she would probably rise to clean womanhood and Christian service.

It is probably true that even the worst of women are more sinned against than sinners! It has been charged, and probably is true, that women today whose influence curses everything they touch were probably inveigled and persuaded in the first wrong act by some weak or wicked man.

Against this fact, however, we must not overlook the more important fact that every woman is safe within the citadel of her own heart, and there is no power on earth that can do her ill unless she first unlocks the door. Woman is her own architect—contractor—builder!

Woman, by her own deliberate choice, will decide her own character, and decide her own destiny. God will hold her accountable for the choice she makes, and will hold her likewise accountable for the influence which she exerts.

Woman definitely decides the level on which she will live her life, and whether her influence shall ennoble and save, or degrade and damn. If woman deliberately choose to trifle or flirt with those agencies that have wrought demoralization and death to multitudes of other women, they have no one to blame but themselves when the tragic hour comes and they find themselves in the tomb of a moral leper.

Several years ago a man who had been a prominent business man came to the room at my hotel to tell me his story. As he sat before me, a bundle of nerves, with mind all but burned to chaos and heart burned to a clot through drink, he said, "I drink". After some seconds of silence he said, "I drink—do you understand? I drink." I answered, "Yes, I understand. What you mean to say is, 'I drink and when drunk I do almost everything else that is vicious and degrading.' " "That's just it," he cried, "I drink, and when I am drunk I do everything else. My business is gone—my family is gone—God is gone."

When any woman, no matter how strong she thinks herself to be, places the cup of intoxicating liquor to her lips, she deliberately places her virtue on the gambler's table, with the chances

about nine to one that virtue will eventually be lost. Multitudes of girls find that first having lost their senses in the wincup, they lose their virtue to lust.

It goes without argument that it is absolutely inconceivable that the Shunammite woman drank liquor in any form, or premitted liquor to be served at her table, or that she set the seal of her approval to intoxicating liquor at any time or any place under Heaven. Had this woman been a tippler or a trifler or a fool regarding this question the world would probably never have known that she ever existed.

Even at the expense of being a crank, a fanatic, or a fool the strong woman of today, who seeks to make a wholesome contribution to the community's life, will stand four-square all the time, everywhere, and anywhere, against intoxicating liquor in every form. Thinking women know, that more than any other agency, intoxicating liquor has run like a juggernaut over woman's heart and created more Gethsemanes of bloody sweat and culminated in more Golgoths of human crucifixion than any other agency of the bottomless pit.

Side by side with the liquor bottle is usually found the deck of cards. If you were to judge certain pastimes or indulgences by their associations, the deck of cards would be immediately consigned to the fire. Everywhere in the underworld where is vice, immorality, criminality, and blood, there is everywhere the rat-tat of the card game.

From their inception or origination, cards have ever been used as the chief tool of the gambler.

Through the turn of the cards banks have been wrecked, merchantile establishments made insolvent, and manufacturing industries flung on the rocks. Through the passions of the game, men and women have lied, stolen, forged, and even committed murder. In fact, there is no depth of infamy to which the gambling passion does not plunge its victim, once the habit is formed.

Liquor and cards have been inseparable and terrible. Down through the years they have come hand in hand, spreading havoc and misery and woe and heartache and heartbreak and tragedy—midnight and mid-noon, everywhere.

They claim it is a matter of absolute record that thus far in our American history no great son or great daughter has been produced by a card-crazy mother.

Upon the center table of the Shunammite woman no cards would ever have been found, even had cards been as popular then as they are now. And in her china closet, or upon her walls, would have been found no chinaware and no pictures won at the gambling table.

The Shunammite woman was not only known for the good things to which she gave her life; she was likewise known for the fact that against the evil things, or the questionable things, she threw her influence, her example, and her word of condemnation.

TALK THREE—PART THREE

"He shall turn in thither"— II Kings 4:10

Vividly, and in a most painful way, I recall many circumstances where wonderful young men from the mobilization camps of the World War came to me and, often in tears, said, "Brother Brown, what has come over the women of America? When I left my mother and home I made solemn pledges upon my word of honor as a son and as a church member that I would be true to the ideals of my mother and true to the vows of my church. I naturally supposed that everywhere in this day of darkness multitudes of church men and women would stand ready to go their limit in consecrated efforts to assist me in making those vows good.

"My disappointment and disgust cannot be expressed in human speech. Everywhere, it seems, and especially amongst the women, even of our churches, the highest conceptions of loyalty to the country and service to the soldier boy seem to find no expression outside dancing, card playing, theatre parties, and joy rides."

We may as well face facts, however bitter those facts, and realize that to most of our Legion boys there came the conviction that in the hour of their greatest crisis the church, as a whole, failed to measure up to the high ideals of spiritual service, and that largely the women of our churches

forgot God and Christian patriotism and dropped to the low level, in their excesses of worldliness, to where they all but literally danced on the graves of our dead.

Our wonderful boys will honor and respect and love and fight for that which measures up to their highest ideals and their best dreams. And certainly this is true when it comes to the church and to Christian service. The very courage of our boys which made them willing to die for a high ideal flung them to the opposite extreme of absolute disgust when, in the acid test of their Christian religion, multitudes of women demonstrated that they had no higher conception of immortality and the day of the final accounting than that which centers back in cheap pretense or open mockery.

While our boys were making the supreme sacrifice—leaving behind home and loved ones and earthly ambitions—and many of whom were to fall “Over There,” and whose bodies were to sleep where the poppies grow—sleep beneath the soil made red by the blood of the millions slain, our women at home, multitudes of whom had been dedicated to God and Christian service, were not only not pointing our boys and girls Heavenward and Godward, but they were actually inveigling our young life into every excess and extreme of worldliness.

Our Legion boys, with multitudes of boys who did not leave for the battle front, were so shocked and so grieved over the apparent failure of our church women to ring true to the holy faith to

which they had dedicated themselves in the solemn vows of their church identification that, increasingly so, the ministry of the church is finding it all but impossible to draw these young men into any of the services of the church—much less to interest them in the spiritual activities that center there.

Whatever the World War brought to the nation at large, and to the church in particular, one thing sure, it wrought sad havoc amongst our women in general and amongst our church women in particular. Only a blind man can fail to realize how terribly the standards have been lowered everywhere in our American homes, and nowhere is that drift more certainly apparent than amongst our women.

As one of the indications showing which way the tide is running, one of our large high schools in a certain city recently voted on the question as to whether that licentious, vulgar thing called "jazz dancing" should or should not be banished from all high school activities. By actual tabulated, segregated count, the boys voted two to one against the dance, while every girl of that large student body, but one, voted in favor of it.

Jazz dancing is nothing under Heaven but a physical intoxication, and America has reached a sad state when the physicians of the social state must sadly confess that women, much more generally so than men, are intoxicated by the excesses of jazz dancing, and that jazz dancing is literally threatening the morals of the American republic.

That the Shunammite woman, of whom God

said, "A Great Woman," was not classed, or would not have been classed, with the devotees of the ballroom goes without question. And that she would not only have abstained from all participation in an indulgence fraught with such terrible consequences to our young life, but that she would have also been definitely known amongst those who set the seal of their disapproval upon such extremes, would have also been certain.

Jazz living, jazz dancing, and jazz dressing have just about stripped the average American girl of all sense of modesty, and unless some power other than human intervenes to stay this tide, and unless that higher power turns back this onswEEPing flood of gilded nastiness, only God can foretell or foresee what the end will be.

It was the Prophet Isaiah who gives us a picture of the "flapper" as she appeared on the streets ages ago, and this picture, as recorded in the third chapter of Isaiah, carries with it solemn warning that God is soon to speak in judgment. We would suggest that the hair-bobbing, pants-wearing, cigarette-smoking, lip-painting, slang-talking, street-gadding, jazz-drunk girl, who lounges in public places and who all but literally hounds the footsteps of the average young man, stop long enough to ponder seriously the Prophet's warning and the Prophet's appeal.

"Moreover Jehovah said, because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet;

therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and Jehovah will lay bare their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets, and the cauls, and the crescents; the pendants, and the bracelets, and the mufflers; the headtires, and the ankle chains, and the sashes, and the perfume-boxes, and the amulets; the rings, and the nose-jewels; the festival robes, and the mantles, and the shawls, and the satchels; the hand-mirrors, and the fine linen, and the turbans, and the veils.

“And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet spices there shall be rottenness; and instead of a girdle, a rope; and instead of well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a robe, a girdling of sackcloth; branding instead of beauty. Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she shall be desolate and sit upon the ground.”

TALK THREE—PART FOUR

“And it fell on a day that he came thither.”
II Kings 4:11.

Fortunate is that woman whose life is so dedicated to God and the high ideals of Christian womanhood that all who come within the radius of her influence are definitely inspired, ennobled and fed.

Some homes become centers of Christian refinement, engaging, and helpful conversation, and wholesome, helpful association. Unless one has traveled much, no conception can be had of the differences which exist in the homes of the people.

When one sits in the circle of some homes to listen to the meaningless jabber, quarreling, slang expressions, interspersed with jazz songs and jazz music, one comes to seriously question whether deaf people miss much after all.

Whatever the accomplishments of women in other sets or circles, there is no field that offers larger dividends in constructive, worth while living than that field which centers back in the old-fashioned home. It is there that woman stands highest, lives longest, and serves best. It is there she is most loved, most served, and most missed.

Rich and happy is that woman whose personal life and home life combine to create such high ideals of wifehood and motherhood that to that home husband and children turn as the weary traveler might to a "rock in a weary land" or to an oasis on a sun-scorched desert.

This Shunammite woman, through the very fact of her devotion to her home, and to her husband, and to her son, would have been compelled to renounce and denounce, without any reservation, the cheap literature, cheap pictures, and cheap theatres with which this land is cursed.

Every thinking woman realized that two of the most potential agencies for the construction or destruction of the ideals of our youth center

back in the literature which our children read and the amusements in which our children indulge. Like the plague of lice in the land of Egypt, America today is crawling alive with a God-smitten, mind-dwarfing, soul-destroying, literature, much of which is sold over the news stands of all our cities and often carried into the homes of those who profess loyalty to Jesus Christ.

"Out of three thousand magazines and weekly journals that come to this news stand," said a news dealer in a certain city to me recently, "not twenty-five of them are fit to carry into decent homes."

"We want some magazines, and the wildest you have got," said a group of college girls, when buying a bunch of magazines to carry back to a dormitory with them.

From the news stands of a certain city sixteen magazines were banished recently, and amongst this number were such magazines as "Real Life," "Breezy Stories," and "Whiz-Bang."

Under all sorts of attractive covers and under all sorts of attractive titles, America is being flooded today with literature which twenty years ago would have landed the author and publisher of such trash behind the penitentiary bars.

Side by side with this sweep of cheap, suggestive, and vicious literature, there runs an endless stream of cheap, suggestive, and vicious pictures. It is a matter of common knowledge

that the Jew has come to all but completely control our moving pictures, our popular songs, and cheap magazines.

Without any reflection on the Jewish race as a people, it can be truthfully said that the type of Jew who is making merchandise out of our Gentile youth today by capitalizing the weakness of our youth is that type of Jew who cares nothing for the American Holy Day, for the Gentile Christ, or for any of the more sacred and beautiful things about which the American home is built.

The Saturday Evening Post is authority for the announcement that in the high schools of a certain city it was found that seven hundred students in one year had begun the use of dope. Parents profess to be greatly shocked at this revelation, and yet from the time their children are old enough to actually walk they are led into, or sent into, the moving picture houses of America to look upon pictures where the heroine is known to be a dope fiend, whose beautiful home is often ablaze with many-colored lights, beneath which sit the so-called "leading lights" of the moving picture industry, participating in their so-called "snow parties" for which the industry has become famous—or infamous.

It is very probable that the average educator would agree that what our children see in the matter of their pictures, and what they read, will do more to decide their characters and decide

their destinies than almost all other agencies combined.

Near where I sit a daily paper publishes an editorial dealing with the sad revelations of the police courts of that city, whose records show most of the prisoners behind the bars of that city's jail are boys under twenty-one years of age.

The chief of the state bureau of criminal identification announces that amongst the men arrested for crime during the year there were 1,214 juveniles. This paper editorially lists the contributing causes as the automobile, the bootlegger, and dope.

Since his paper was loaded up with high-priced ads carried by the score or more of moving picture houses, he dared not tell his constituency, what he probably knew to be true, that most of these young men had been fed on crime and everything that centers in the criminal's life by the moving picture industry from the time they had left the cradle.

What the attitude of this great woman of the city of Shunem would have been on these issues we are not left to even conjecture. The literature of the home, had this woman lived in this day and age of the world's history, would have been clean. And the amusements to which she gave her sanction, and in which she premitted her son to indulge, would likewise have been clean.

Mothers need to be awakened to a realization of the fact that most children are probably made or damned by these two potent agencies, pictures and literature.

TALK NUMBER FOUR

PART ONE

"A great woman," II Kings, 4:8.

BACK of this great woman of Shunem fame there doubtless stood a great mother. The time to begin training a child, they say, is to begin with the child's mother. Probably the better plan would be to begin with the child's great grandmother. That "like begets like" was never more fearfully or gloriously true than right here. That "blood will tell" is just as certain, or a little more certain, in the human family, than anywhere else in the world.

America is spending millions of dollars annually in a campaign to demonstrate to our farmers the possibility and the advisability of raising only pure-bred stock. Every possible effort is being made, and with apparent success, to breed up our horses, cattle, hogs, and sheep.

And, contrasted with this fact, the fact may just as well be stated that while as a nation we are making extensive and successful efforts to breed up our live stock, we are often turning our sons and daughters, who are to be the fathers and mothers of coming generations, over to the scathing, blasting, demoralizing, degrading, and damning influences of the streets.

It is a safe guess that if this Shunammite wom-

an had had the same type of a mother that Maggie Jiggs had she would have been the living, walking, talking image of Maggie Jiggs. If she had had the mother of a Mrs. Andrew Gump she would have been the forerunner of the widely advertised "Min."

In other words, if the mother is a goose you can't expect a crop of children that measures much above the average of the ordinary "gosling." Like produces like. And nothing can come from wheat but wheat, nothing can come from tares but tares, nothing can come from geese but goslings.

A mother said to me recently, as she pointed to her little slip of a fifteen-year-old, unsophisticated, and beautiful daughter, "I have told my child that mamma does not want her to run the streets unchaperoned, ride about in automobiles, and engage in jazz dancing, and that if she does these things, she does them contrary to her mother's wishes, and she alone is responsible for the consequences!"

What a horrible lie! What an absurdity! What a reflection on the sacred, binding, responsibilities of motherhood! That child responsible? Not in a million years! And the father or mother who seeks thus to evade responsibility, and to place upon the shoulders of an immature child the responsibility of eternal decisions, is unfit to associate with children, much less to assume the responsibilities of fatherhood and motherhood.

The mother who permits her daughter to run the

streets in this day of darkness, unchaperoned, and unrestrained, is a criminal! The mother who permits her daughter to ride in automobiles at all hours of the night is a criminal! The mother who, in her laziness and indolence, goes to bed to sleep and leaves every Tom, Dick, and Harry staying till all hours of the night in the parlor with her daughter is a criminal!

Too many mothers today are not mothers—they are only a convenience! In fact, it is heartbreaking the way some girls joke about their mothers, and how easy it is to flim-flam or deceive them.

There is only one tragedy more far-reaching than the tragedy of ignorant mothers or innocent, trusting mothers, rocking their lazy souls and asleep in their unquestioned and unquestioning innocence while their children are headed for hell, and that is the tragedy of a mother who deliberately conspires and assists her children in overriding the laws of her home or the laws of a decent society.

Some mothers, Rebecca-like, will enter into a conspiracy, deliberately planned, or lend the influence of their silence to such conspiracy, with a deliberate attempt to trick, mislead, or deceive those who exercise authority over the home, church, or schools, never realizing that in such trickeries and dishonesties they are laying the foundation for a whole world of discord, division, and possibly disgrace.

To be true, often the tables are turned and it is the mother who weeps, suffers, prays, and fears,

while the father lends every possible aid to the agencies that will sooner or later disrupt the home.

Some mothers make no protest over the fact that son or daughter is playing one sweetheart against another, or one beau against another, seeming to feel in their silly, shallow minds and hearts that the child is specially fortunate and is really playing a winning game when it thus flirts and thus trifles with the affections and destinies of those whom it thus attracts.

To be true, the reaping time eventually comes for the daughter, and the little fool reaps her "April Fool" by finding, like poor, blind Esau, that the birthright of honor and love, is an inheritance that, once wasted, can be hers no more forever.

Mothers who encourage their sons or daughters to stoop to dishonorable things need not be surprised when the child drops to a dishonorable life.

If men who trifle with the love of a woman's heart are criminals, then the reverse is also true, and the woman who trifles with the love of men, becomes a criminal. This woman of Shunem—this great woman—was a great mother, refined, modest, loyal, and true; but her greatness as a mother, and as a wife, was traceable back to that greater fact that she was great as a sweetheart, great in ideals, great in love, great in modesty, and great in purity.

TALK FOUR—PART TWO

"Thou hast been careful," II Kings 4:13.

Every girl passes at her own valuation. Nothing is more sacred, beautiful, and pure than a sweet, pure, refined, modest, girlish girl. Nothing is cheaper, more vulgar, or more disgusting than a street-gadding, gum-chewing, slangy, highly-painted, common girl, who seeks to imitate men and who makes herself common amongst men.

I was on a train in a northern state recently, when a woman with her husband entered the Pullman car. At a distance she was one of the most strikingly beautiful women I have ever seen. She immediately attracted the attention of every person in the crowded car.

When the people were seated it so happened that they had their reservation immediately across the aisle from mine, and, as terrible as it may sound, no sooner did that beautiful creature open her mouth, than you were in the back alley, with all the ugliness and repulsiveness of the back alley.

In other words, her language was made up of incorrect English, slang, and petty piffle and twaddle. And when later I got a good look at her face again, strange to say, she was just as ugly on second consideration as she had appeared to be beautiful on first sight.

There is an old saying that beauty is as beauty does. And this saying is just as truthful as it is

old. If ugliness is only skin deep then a lot of people ought to be skinned, and certainly when one stops to consider the frantic and often ludicrous attempts which women make to put something attractive on the outside one cannot help but feel there must be mighty little on the inside.

A prominent doctor in Oakland was assisting in the great Berkeley fire. With the flames sweeping down on the city, and the university threatened, he helped carry the belongings of a group of university girls out of their boarding house, across on the university campus. One can imagine something of his amazement when one of the young women immediately adjusted her dresser, got out her powder and paint, and, with fire and smoke sweeping down on the city, deliberately sat there on the open campus going through the ridiculous process of powdering her cheeks and painting her lips.

In one of my tabernacle meetings recently, as I was closing one of the most serious sermons that I could possibly preach, a nice looking young lady three seats from the front opened her vanity case, adjusted it on her lap, and just as indifferent to the surroundings as though she had been in the privacy of her own home, proceeded to adjust her hair, powder her nose, and redden up the color with which her ugly lips had already been made red.

They say Nero fiddled while Rome burned, but the modern flapper makes Nero look like a cheap skate. They can actually sit and paint while a city goes up in a cloud of fire and smoke,

or unconcernedly put on a second layer of enamel while about them penitent men and women are crying out, "What must I do to be saved?"

And just here we may as well face facts. The average boy of to-day does not idealize these girls. Young men cannot idealize girls who make themselves familiar. Young men cannot idealize girls who make themselves common. Young men cannot idealize girls who paint, smoke cigarettes, talk slang, and live jazz.

"Oh, if my daughter would only marry some good man and settle down to the making of a home," was the cry of a mother recently who had indulged her daughter, bought her an automobile, shoved her out in society, and permitted her to run the streets all hours of the night.

Poor, silly mother! There wasn't a man in that town decent enough for the dogs to bark at that would have taken that girl on a bet!

Multitudes of our girls have been fed up on the slush and gush of cheap novels, and cheaper movies, until their conception of love centers back in the dream world of novel and play, where libertines and refined harlots parade their nastiness and their lust. It is the unthinking multitudes of our young people who never stop to realize that about nine-tenths of that which parades itself as the great love of some affinity, or the sympathizing heart of some "sheik" who throws the arm of protection around the misunderstood wife, or the beautiful vamp who understands the badly misunderstood husband, is not love at all, but is nothing more or nothing less

than a vicious, degrading, degenerate lust that wouldn't know love if it met it face to face in the street.

Love never permits itself to be an unseemly or hurtful thing. Love never permits itself to stoop to trickery, dishonesty, or fraud. Love never permits itself—by act, word, or deed—to do that which brings hurt to innocent hearts or the stain of shame upon the fair name of others. Love would lay its head on the block and have its head severed from its body before it would cross the threshold of another's home to disrupt the peace of another's heart, or send little children, branded, to the streets.

This is the day of the beast, and under the pretext of a great love multitudes are selling their immortality for a mess of sensuality! Love and lust have nothing in common. Love is honorable, honest, ennobling, and beautiful, everywhere under all circumstances. Lust is dishonest, dishonorable, degenerate, and defiling in whatever set or circle it may exercise its sway.

There have been some striking incidents of suicide within the last year, and this with increasing frequency amongst certain types of women and girls. The facts are these women trifled with honor and played fast and loose with that something called love, until they themselves became the victim of their own dishonorable and dishonest lives. And with a burnt-out heart, sin-defiled body, and seared soul, they ended their

pitiable existence here by taking the short cut to the unquenchable fires of the great hereafter.

TALK FOUR—PART THREE

"With all this care"—II Kings, 4:13.

Choice decides character, and character decides destiny. Every girl makes her own choices, decides her own character, and thus decides her own destiny. If she has a wise mother and is taught to place honor and virtue and Christlikeness over and above all price—a mother whose aspiration is that which points her daughter to the building of a beautiful, queenly, womanly character—the chances for that girl are brighter, and the prospects for the future of that girl are the more hopeful.

If, on the other hand, the mother's conception of life involves nothing higher than the meaningless parade of social nonentities with whatever of fashion, pomp, and parade may center back in the purposeless existence of these human parasites, the chances for that girl are rather slim, and her future any far-seeing man could easily predict.

Marriage is on the decrease, and divorce is on the increase. In certain circles today marriages are sadly infrequent, while the divorce courts, with their disgusting, nauseating scandal and nastiness, are driven to extra hours in order

to take care of the grist which disillusioned young people bring to the divorce mill. Some of the scandals aired in our divorce courts today involve so much of brutality and indecency that the whole mess must become a stench in the nostrils of God.

Mothers often come to me with, "I don't believe in the looseness of conduct and the promiscuous intermingling of sexes which culminates in the sensual, licentious dance, the midnight automobile ride, and the uncensored moving picture; but parents everywhere are permitting their children these liberties, and unless I let my children go with the crowd they will not have a chance!"

And when mothers come to me with that sort of a declaration, I immediately come back at them with the question, "A chance for what?" A chance for your children to make themselves cheap? A chance for your children to see the underside of life? A chance for your children to lose the touch of innocence and the blush of purity? A chance for your children to go to hell?

Now what the mother really means is, "Unless I permit my daughter to be one in the crowd, and to run with the crowd to all these excesses of amusement, my daughter will not have a chance to get married." And to hear some mothers talk you would think that according to that mother's conception the supreme purpose for which that girl came into the world is to get a husband,

and, unless married, the girl's life must necessarily end in failure.

My argument is that there are a thousand things worse than living the life of a bachelor woman. Men and women sometimes refer rather disrespectfully to that large and entirely worthy class of bachelor women, designating them as "old maids," not realizing that there is no such thing as an "old maid," and that multitudes of women so designated and so branded are traveling life's pathway alone not because they could not have a husband, but wholly because their ideals were so sacred, that they would not sell out to the first creature of the masculine gender who chanced to stray their way.

There is such a thing as an unattached, unassigned, unappropriated bundle of single, blissful, hopeful, feminine blessedness; but in all the wide, wide world there is no such creature—and never has been and never will be—as that to which men refer when they speak of the "old maid."

However, if I were a woman of culture and refinement and conviction, I had rather be an "old maid"—if there were such creatures—three hundred years old, wet by the dews and twisted by the sun, and triplets at that, than to be the wife of a billy goat, tobacco-eating, Sabbath-desecrating, moonshine-guzzling, profane, bewhiskered son of the forked-tailed devil, that I would have to slave for all my days.

When mothers argue that their daughters must

have a chance, such mothers should be reminded that every girl passes at her own valuation, and that if she advertises herself on the ten cent counter she will probably sell for ten cents. The most beautiful creature God ever made is a modest, refined, retiring, educated, healthy, girlish girl—and the most common, disgusting, and worthless creature on earth is a street-gadding, slangy, painted, gum-chewing, gossiping, she-man, who makes herself common with every Tom, Dick, and Harry, until her name is mixed up with profanity, vulgarity, and indecency in the street corner conversation of the street corner crowd.

The big ideal of every man's heart is a wife and home and love. Facts may just as well be faced, and the facts are that the average serious-minded young man of today knows that, while the average girl is reaching out for and hoping for a home and husband, she, at the same time, is praying fervently—if she ever prays—that when that home is hers, and that husband is hers, she will not have to assume the exacting responsibilities that always go with the making of a home.

The average silly, sloppy, sentimental, gushing, gadding, slangy girl, chasing some young man, and hoping to catch him as a husband, is just as ludicrous as a feist dog chasing a sixty-car freight train. In other words, if the dog caught the train what would he do with it?

The highest accomplishments of many girls today are only those that shine brightest at the card party and jazz dance. John the Baptist lost his

head through the fact that a beautiful girl could not keep her feet on the floor. Multitudes of modern boys lose their heads as they watch some airy, fairy creature swinging gracefully over the ballroom floor, only to discover when too late that it takes something more than a graceful dancer to make a happy home.

If you could see that young wife as that husband sees her a few mornings after the marriage, when she has none of the "fixings" on, and could sit down at the table and face the tragic result of an attempt to prepare a meal, you would not blame the young husband for undertaking to commit suicide by sticking his head in the slop bucket.

TALK FOUR—PART FOUR

"What is to be done?"—II Kings, 4:13.

As strange as it may sound to the average woman, men do not want wives who are their *equal* in intelligence, morals, and spirituality! It is the peculiar twist of every man's mind that, however good he may be, or however bad he may be, he wants to believe that his wife or his mother is his superior when it comes to morality and spirituality.

It is also true that there is a fascination and wonderful allurements in courtship, especially so when the object of the affection seems to move in a realm far above and beyond us, and doubly

so when that girl is modest and retiring and rather difficult of approach.

It is a mistaken idea that men admire most the girl who gets down on a level with men and who seeks to be familiar with men. To be true, as Dr. Stearns, of Andover college, has said, "Young men will play around with a girl like that, but young men do not idealize such girls." It has always been true that that which is hardest to get, men appreciate most, and in this particular certainly it is that which stands at a distance, with all its beauty, refinement, and modesty, which brings reverence, devotion, and awe to the hearts of young men.

And this is just the lesson that the mothers of our girls need to learn today. Multitudes of girls who run the streets today, and who will end in tragedy—if they are not already there—had they been properly restrained and properly trained would have been the queens of some men's hearts, and the queens—reigning triumphantly and happily—over some men's homes.

Mothers, however, laboring under the devil's delusion that to give their daughters a chance they must ape the procession, dress out, or dress down, or dress up, their beautiful, unsophisticated, silly girls, and shove them out into the usual excesses to which the modern flapper goes, never realize that they are heading their daughters for the breakers, and they, themselves, will probably be engulfed by the waves.

That these daughters thus shoved out, and thus

advertised, may eventually catch a husband is probable; but God have mercy when the child finally does hook on to something. It's a sure shot she will have to bring it home. And when she comes dragging that husband in, it will look like something that the cats brought in.

It is a strange angle in a mother's mind that she can advertise her daughter cheaply—say on the ten-cent counter—and have that daughter bring in a million-dollar husband. “Cheep, cheep, cheep,” is the first cry of a half-hatched chicken. And “Cheap, cheap, cheap,” should be the cry over these half-dressed chicken flappers who congest the streets. And, mother dear, when that street-gadding daughter comes dragging in that street-loafing buck of a husband you will not dare poison him, because if you did the authorities would probably have you up for killing a human being!

Silly, silly, mothers! And goosey, goosey, gosling girls! When will women realize that the best and truest and cleanest young men that God's sun ever shown upon will literally go thousands of miles if they hope that at the end of their journey they will find the girl of their dreams—the girl who is beautiful, refined, modest, and pure?

Only recently I heard of a serious-minded, ambitious boy, who, disgusted with the familiarity and vulgarity of the street flapper, said, “The girl that I would marry hasn't been born, and her mother is dead.” And as a striking contrast,

I am reminded of an instance in a certain Southern city where lived a girl who was as beautiful and as graceful and as queenly as ever a girl could be. She was known for her beauty, for her modesty, and for her refinement.

Very frankly she admitted that the story was true that on one occasion a certain young man who had been visiting her home for several months had sought to kiss her, and she had slapped his jaws and ordered him to go home and kiss his mother. In admitting this story to be true to the circle of friends who sat in her home, I can never forget how, in her blushing modesty, she said, "Some day I expect to meet the man whom I am privileged to call husband, and when that time comes I want to know, and I want him to know, that I have saved all I have of purity, modesty, and affection for him."

At the state capitol, over a hundred miles away, there lived a wealthy young man, who, too, was as straight as an arrow and as clean as a hound's tooth. Through certain channels this story came to his ears. And, to the utter amazement of his friends, he immediately announced that he was leaving for that city, to at least have the privilege of seeing that girl, whether he ever got to know her or not.

It was a case of love at sight, and the time came when I received an invitation to that wedding, and today in a certain city in a certain state there is a most wonderful home, with a happy and contented father, a beautiful, heal-

thy wife, and several wonderful children, who are the joy and the rejoicing of the parents' hearts.

Only recently, after I had talked along this line in a certain city, a wonderful girl, with sparkling eyes and rosy cheeks—a girl that was a perfect picture of health, purity and modesty—came up on the platform, saying, "Brother Brown, I never thought that I could tell any person but my mother what I am telling you. Without any embarrassment whatever I do tell you that the big dream of my life is to be a wife and a mother—is to have a home and children—and toward this high goal I have thought and planned and prayed, and I am fitting myself in every way possible to properly assume and successfully discharge the obligations that center in wifehood and motherhood."

And I answered, "Child, you are not embarrassed in telling me of this big dream because it is God's plan for you, as it is God's plan for our girls everywhere."

TALK NUMBER FIVE

PART ONE

"A Great Woman."—II Kings, 4:8

WHEN God Says of any man what he said of Cornelius, "A devout man," we can mark it down that by all the measurements, or all the standards by which a devout man is measured or weighed, that man will stand the test. Also, somewhere about that character will probably be found a key that, if rightly used, will unlock the door and permit one to read clearly the steps which that person took in climbing to that high level of godliness.

Men and women do not become godly through some act of a partial providence or through the turn of the wheel of fortune or of fate, but they attain to that high level through meeting certain conditions and by paying a set, fixed price. Of Cornelius it was written, "A devout man—one that feared God—with all his house—gave much alms to the people—prayed to God always." When we read this inspired declaration concerning the man Cornelius, we understand something of the process by which he attained to the high levels of one who walks with God.

So too with this Shunammite woman. Of her God said, "A great woman." And when we study the verses in which the brief story of her

life was given we are amazed how every verse and every sentence, and almost every word, is crowded with tremendous significance. Out of this deep well of a holy life one might literally preach for months and never exhaust the boundless supply of suggestive materials which well up from its unmeasured deep. This woman was great in all essential relationships of a woman's life. She was great as a sweetheart, as a wife, as a mother, and as a home maker. In these fields woman has no competition, and in these sacred relationships she occupies exalted and exclusive opportunities and privileges that an angel might covet.

Reading the few verses that bear to the world the story of this great woman, you are aware, not so much by what is said as by what is left unsaid, that this woman was great as a sweetheart and wife. Reading the few verses that bear to the world the story of this great woman, you are aware, not so much by what is said as by what is left unsaid, that this woman was great as a mother. Reading the few verses that bear to the world the story of this great woman you are aware, not so much by what is said as by what is left unsaid, that this woman was great as a homemaker.

And let it be said right here that the fact stands out as plain as a pikestaff that the woman who rings true as a sweetheart, who is faithful and loyal as a wife, devout and wise as a mother and who succeeds in building a real

home, has achieved the highest successes ever permitted to mortals this side of the skies.

I have always believed in "woman's rights"—preached and taught that women should have the right of franchise, believing that when women could speak their convictions at the polls there would come a revolution in this America of ours that would startle the world. I am very frank to say that my dreams of an earthly paradise to be attained by the use of the ballot in the hands of our women did not materialize. And my disappointments have been many and bitter. Yet, after all this is said, I would not retrace the steps we have taken or take from women those rights which find expression at the ballot box.

When men argued that to give women the right of franchise would mean to have riot, confusion, and chaos in the political world, I simply replied that if women could make any greater mess in politics than men had made I would like to view that mess, provided I could view it from some distant hilltop, with some sort of an antiseptic pad over my nose. I still believe that women should have all the rights that men have in expressing their convictions at the polls when the issues to be determined probably involve women, and certainly involve the home, as much or more than they involve men. After that is said, I doubt seriously if God ever intended women to run for office or go gallivanting over the states of the nation seeking to usurp

the prerogatives of men, and to occupy offices where it becomes necessary for women to direct the affairs of men.

When we find women today shingling their hair, wearing breeches, smoking cigarettes, and hanging around barber shops, one cannot help but feel that the so-called "emancipation of women" is creating a crop of girls in our American life who spell death to God's ideals of wifehood, motherhood, and home.

When women argue that men have lost all conception of the ideals of courtesy, and especially so in the relationships which men sustain toward women, women should not forget that woman alone is responsible for that condition! Since women have begun dressing like men, smoking like men, and are everywhere entering into competition with men, men have come to feel that women can take her chances in finding a seat on a street car or in the train, as well as take her chances everywhere else where old-time courtesies in the age that is gone would have demanded that women have the preference.

TALK FIVE—PART TWO

"And she said unto her husband," II Kings 4:9.

Women, according to the Divine announcement, were made to be a "helpmeet" for man. Woman was not made to wear trousers, boss the family, organize churches, indoctrinate com-

munities, or direct the affairs of city, state, or nation. She was not made to sit in the legislative halls of our nation, to absorb tobacco smoke, lobby, drive bargains, expatiate on the problems and dangers with which the Republic is beset, nor was she ordained of God to save the country by the organization or education that centers in pulpit, platform, or public forum.

All the political maneuvering, bargaining, and manipulation of a million years would not contain the essential virtues and integrities that go to build one single city, much less a great republic. Politics, even when it reaches the high level of the "science of good government," is, after all, only dealing with externals. And externals never yet breathed a breath of honor, virtue, and greatness into the life of any nation.

If it is true—and it is true—that a nation can rise no higher than the level of its homes, then the further fact is evident that the home can rise no higher than the level of a woman's heart. And this whole situation resolves itself back into the fundamental fact that the beat of the heart of our womanhood throbs life or death to the entire nation.

A man approached a home behind the closed doors of which there seemed to be an infant earthquake. Bang! Biff! Zip! Slamity!—Bangity!—Slam!—Bang!—Biff! The man hesitated a second and then rang the door bell. As the noise continued he rang again and, this time, longer and louder. After several vigorous

rings quiet reigned within. The door opened and a disheveled man, coatless, hatless, breathless, and badly scratched, appeared at the door.

"Beg pardon, sir," said the visitor, "but I would like to see the head of this house." With a sarcastic grin, the fellow replied, "Mister, you just sit down on the porch there for a little while until the issues within this house are settled. As a matter of fact, I am trying to determine right now who is the head of this house."

Some women get the idea that God has reversed the order in these latter days, and that it is no longer the high objective of woman's life to be a "helpmeet" to man, but that in the new order woman is to be the head of the house, cock of the walk, voice of supreme authority, including the constitution, by-laws, and preamble, with full and exclusive control of whoever and whatever may center back in the diversified activities and identifications of the marriage state.

Woman seeks to exercise authority over the unfortunate and unhappy victim of the home, believing that happiness is best found by exercising authority over the one whom she professes to love, but no sooner is that goal reached than the discovery is made that, instead of finding happiness, she has not only lost happiness but in the process has lost completely whatever respect and whatever love she once had for her legal lord, or "lordie."

No woman on earth can look up to, lean on, respect, reverence, and love a meek, docile, flea-

bitten, lamb-like nonentity, who in the presence of his wife would be scared even to tell his own age, name or nationality!

"The man that I marry," said a flapper girl, "will certainly have to be brave." And that flapping flip of a flapper might have added, "He will not only have to be brave, but, to marry me, he will have to be positively reckless."

In a Canadian city a prominent department store owner came to me in great distress. His health was gone, his business was slipping, and the rocks were ahead. The man was a devout Christian and had formed a tragic alliance in the marriage relation. He had married a beautiful woman who was worldly, self-centered, indolent, and weak, if not actually wicked. She had pretended great love for Christ and for the church and had renounced all her worldly ways and worldly companionships at marriage.

After marriage she began making her demands, and, to save friction, the husband had permitted her to have pretty much her own way. Gradually she drifted back into the old amusements and finally began spending her nights at the moving picture show or at the cabarets. The whole thing had culminated in her forsaking her home and baby, and now she was living with the thoughtless, godless many who make up the night life of the average great city.

This man came to me for advice. He was making her a monthly allowance, and a very generous

allowance at that, and was hoping and praying that some day she would come back to her home and back to her baby. When I told him in so many words that he was a fool— stark, staring mad—and that he was doing great injustice to the baby, to himself, to his business, and business associates, in seeking to woo back or win back that beautiful, vicious degenerate, he seemed surprised and grieved.

When I tried to tell him that any woman who would forsake God and the church, and a high grade Christian husband and her own sweet babe, for the night life of a great city was unworthy the position of blacking his shoes and that the sooner he forgot her and put her out of his mind the better it would be for him and for those he loved, he looked upon me with a tragically pathetic, incredulous gaze and then sought to argue that the ruin and the chaos into which his home had been plunged might yet be swept away if only she would come back.

Thousands of homes in America today are miniature Heavens on earth, and they are made that through the wonders of a woman's love and a woman's life. And, just so, thousands of homes in America today are little short of hells on earth, and they are made that, often, through the weakness of wickedness of woman.

TALK FIVE—PART THREE

"I perceive that this is an holy man." II Kings 4:9.

No woman can fulfill her mission in the world as a wife, mother, or home-maker who is not a Christian. It is inconceivable how any woman can stand before the cross of Christ and not have her heart stirred to a deep sense of obligation, reverence, and love. It is a matter of common knowledge and common comment that in the lands where Jesus Christ is not preached, loved, and followed, women are not only practically in bondage but they are often used as beasts of burden are used.

It was Jesus Christ who lifted the yoke from woman's neck. It was Jesus Christ who lifted the loadstone of ignorance from woman's mind! It was Jesus Christ who took woman from the obscurity, superstition, and degradation of physical, mental, and spiritual inferiority to make her man's equal, and often man's idol!

It was Jesus Christ who took woman, to set her, though uncrowned, upon the throne of a Christian home! The thoughtfulness and tenderness of Jesus toward women and especially so toward those who had lost virtue and hope, was so significant and so marked that men everywhere wondered, questioned, and feared. An irreligious woman is a monstrosity upon the face of the earth. Unless angels could actually behold the spectacle of a Christ-repudiating,

Christ-rejecting, Christ-ridiculing womanhood, they would probably refuse to believe that such a creature ever existed upon this earth.

The horse, if kindly treated, will be stirred to a devotion, often in such a manifest way that that animal would all but literally die for that human companion whose kindly ministrations have played so large a part in the life of the brute. A dog will form such attachment to, and such devotion for, a kind-hearted master that, should occasion arise, he will literally follow that man to the end of the earth, to lie by his side and to die by his side.

Let it be said to the everlasting shame of the human family that both men and women can stand in the presence of the Cross bathed in the blood of the Son of God, and, standing there, realize that God's love and God's mercy stood that Cross between a guilty world and the just punishment to which the world was rushing, and, realizing something of that love and that sacrifice, remain with heart as dead and unresponsive as though the heart were actually made of stone.

As women look upon the Cross, standing high over the city's streets or pounded out of gold and hanging about the necks of women, they cannot but realize that Jesus Christ took that which was the emblem of a world's shame to elevate it by His own precious blood into the emblem of a liberated and redeemed womanhood. How women can accept from the bleeding hands of Christ woman's emancipation and

woman's exaltation, to then spurn the one who made possible this inheritance, is inconceivable and almost unbelievable.

If the heart of a horse is stirred through kindness, and if, in response to proper treatment, a dog will suffer and die for those he loves, old humanity must, of necessity, drop to a lower level than that on which the brute lives if, standing in the presence of the Cross of Christ, old humanity spurns that love and fails to respond to the call of that sacrifice.

Women may be faithful in all the tender and beautiful relationships of the marriage vows and at the same time be unfaithful to, and disloyal to, and unappreciative of the love and sacrifice of Jesus Christ; but it is my deep conviction that when women find it easy to spurn the love of Christ and be disloyal to the love, sacrifice, and suffering of their Lord, they will inevitably find it much easier to be disloyal to and unappreciative of the devotion and faithfulness of the truest and purest of husbands. I sometimes wonder if women are fit to assume the high, holy, and binding relationships of wifehood and motherhood if blind, deaf, and dead to the demands which Jesus Christ and common Christian duty impose upon them.

Christian men have learned to their sorrow, as have Christian women, that whenever marriage alliances are made with those who are not definitely and enthusiastically spiritual, alliances are formed that carry with them every possibility for confusion and disruption.

God never intended that Christian parents should give away their Christian children in marriage to those who sneer and jeer at sacred things. And Just here, probably, is one of the primary causes for oceans of sorrow and worlds of unhappiness found everywhere in the land today.

Multitudes of men in all walks of life, and especially in the ministry, have had their hands tied, their work circumscribed, and their hearts almost broken, through the wickedness of irreligious wives whose highest conception of the marriage relation was a home, with whatever respectability the money and name of some good man might bring.

One does not have to use the imagination to picture to himself something of the high ideals which dominated the life of this great woman of Shunem. As a wife she was a woman who did her husband good and not evil "all the days of his life." The Shunammite woman was a God-fearing, God-honoring, God-loving wife. An irreligious woman is a monstrosity.

TALK FIVE—PART FOUR

"I dwell among mine own people"— II Kings, 4:13.

Truth, they say, is stranger than fiction, and this statement is literally true. The most interesting reading in the world is that which centers

back in the real happenings of real, honest-to-goodness, flesh-and-blood-and-bone humans.

A certain secular magazine has attained to an unprecedented circulation largely through the fact that it has specialized in the life stories of successful men and women. And the true stories concerning these aspiring, climbing mortals have sometimes read just like stories one would expect to find in fairy books, or books containing fairy tales.

In a recent issue of this magazine there appeared the gripping, thrilling, melting story of a certain man who had climbed from the depth of a mine, and the deeper depths of ignorance and failure, to the highest levels of an honored profession, where he not only became an authority in the profession which he represented, but where he also became honored, prosperous, and tremendously potent as an American citizen.

No matter how discouraged or pessimistic one may become regarding the lowered and lowering ideals of the modern flapper, one such a story as this, in which an educated, refined, sacrificing, and unselfish wife stayed put in the position to which God had called her, and became instrumental, largely so, in the construction and completion of such an outstanding life, one feels that probably, after all, the destiny of the race is not entirely a dark one.

The hero of this story was uneducated and poor. Down into the mines each night he carried his books, and every spare moment with an open book

lying by he studied as he worked. Coming up out of the mines there was a bite to eat, a few hours of sleep, and then, closeted with his wife, who was his inspiration and instructor, he more thoroughly sought to master that about which he had studied during the hours of his allotted toil.

When the time had finally come when, to complete his studies and enter upon the practice of law, it became necessary for him to go away to a law school, the family purse, which consisted of a few hundred dollars was divided between the husband and wife, and the wife—who, after all, was the power behind the throne—with her two children, began a struggle that must have aroused the admiration and the enthusiasm of the angels.

While at one end of the line the husband worked all but day and night, without sufficient food and often with scarcely enough clothes to hide his nakedness, this loyal, faithful, godly wife, at the other end of the line, worked almost day and night over her sewing, trying to provide necessities for herself and the two children, and trying to keep herself and the two children provided with sufficient clothes, to conceal in part their poverty and their need.

When the two children were taken down with diphtheria this wonderful woman refused to notify the husband and father of the desperate situation at home, for she knew he hadn't the funds with which to come and that to call him away from the schoolroom would probably be to make

contribution to his failure. The long nights through she battled against disease, loneliness, death, and despair—and won.

When finally her husband had received the coveted diploma and was returning as a general might return from the battlefield of his greatest triumph, that loyal, faithful, wonderful heart at home began casting about for some method or some channel through which she might shower a little bit of recognition upon the one who had at last attained to the high goal of their dreams.

Then the happy thought came that the baby was old enough to get along without the rather expensive baby carriage, and the carriage was sold, the spare room decorated, and the extra meal provided; when the long absent husband reached the home of his dreams he found there a welcome such as only true love and true sacrifice could provide.

The magazine which carries the thrilling story of the struggles, sacrifices, and achievements of this honored couple gives also the picture of their beautiful home, with something of the story of the unusual honor which has been conferred upon this distinguished citizen through the fact of his unusual knowledge and his remarkably unselfish and wholesome Christian life.

If it is true that multitudes of men are woman-damned, let us not forget that multitudes of men are woman-made. Back of many of America's most successful men today—back in the shadow

of the home—with a heart as true to her husband as the needle to the north pole, there stands a faithful, loyal, godly wife, whose influence, like a sweet rosary, floats out to all with whom she comes in contact.

This great lawyer of whom we write, who stands today at the head of our great railroads and who is accepted as an authority in legislation which has to do with all public utilities, would probably have been toiling away today in the circumscribed, back-breaking, health-wrecking darkness of a Pennsylvania coal mine if it had not been for the light and life and encouragement of a wonderful woman who fulfilled God's appointed mission and became a helpmeet to a worthy, ambitious, faithful husband.

Marriage is on the decrease today largely through the fact that multitudes of young men have come to believe that the average girl today is not fitted, and does not care to fit herself, to assume the responsibilities and privileges which God intended the marriage relation should carry.

The average boy knows that, under ordinary circumstances, and with the moderate salary which the average young man receives, it would be utterly impossible for him to support the average girl in idleness and extravagance to which most of them have become accustomed, and, unless there comes a revolution in the minds and hearts of our American girls the time is not far distant when the old time ideals, that center back

in courtship, marriage, wifehood, and motherhood, will largely be lost to our American people.

This great woman of Shunem fame was great in all those essential relationships that center back in a devoted, sacrificing, and godly wifehood.

TALK NUMBER SIX

PART ONE

"A Great Woman." II Kings 4:8.



IN our previous studies we have received somewhat of a glimpse of the greatness of the Shunammite woman in the general picture of her beautiful life. We have gone further and sought to know something of the general negatives and positives which centered back in those periods through which she lived in her girlhood days, in the days of her courtship, with the final culminations and developments which center about her life as a wife.

It is as a mother, however, that her star shines brightest. Up to the coming of the prophet in this home, the home had been a childless home. In the olden days it was practically considered a disgrace to be a wife and not to be a mother. Some of the most tragic stories written on the sacred page are the stories that center back in the pathetic, and sometimes ludicrous, efforts which women made in their frantic attempts to gain the admiration and commendation of their husbands, by bearing them children.

Possibly it was the cry of this great, beautiful heart—another Rachel weeping for her children and finding them not—that moved the heart of the Shunammite woman to minister to the necessities and comforts of the homeless prophet, who so often passed her door.

And just so, God proved to be a good rent-payer. Into this lonely, beautiful home the prophet came, and when there came the prompting of the spirit of God to do something big and royal for the woman who had rendered such distinct service to the servant of God, and the offer of the prophet to place her in kingly circles had been refused, it was then that the servant of Elisha said, "She hath no son." "Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid," was the bewildered, doubting reply of the Shunammite following the declaration of the prophet, "At this season, when the time cometh around, thou shalt embrace a son."

Only to the mother heart—pure, holy, loving—a mother who is a mother indeed—a mother who has besought God to grant her the privileges and wonders of holding in her own arms that which is the outflow of her own blessed flesh—can there ever come any realization of the thrill and intoxication which motherhood brings.

Upon this babe this mother doubtlessly lavished the stored up affections of her great, strong, noble, beautiful heart! Fortunate babe—fortunate mother—fortunate father. And probably the greatest disappointment of this wonderful picture—brief, gripping, God-breathed—is the fact that we must leave the story with the boy but a youngster at his mother's knee.

That he lived to reflect to the world something of the greatness and purity of the mother

heart is all but absolutely certain, for back of every great life the world around there stands, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, a great mother, a mother whose greatness is not necessarily recognized by the world at large, or whose greatness is marked with special talents or special accomplishments that shine brightly before the world, but great rather in her devotion to her home, in her consistency of life, and in her loyalty to those with whom, and for whom, she toils.

If Theodore Roosevelt had had the mother that Nero had he might have become famous or infamous for his slaughter of the weak, rather than through his defense of the weak. If Abraham Lincoln had had the mother of a Benedict Arnold he might have become known as the arch traitor of American history, rather than the martyred president who gave his life for the unity, peace, and salvation of this country. If Woodrow Wilson had had the mother that the kaiser of Germany had he might have gone down in history as the mightiest influence amongst the nations of the world for war and bloodshed rather than the broken, pathetic figure who sat fading away yonder on the banks of the Potomac.

Woman may achieve success in office, shop store, bank, and schoolroom, and may cut some figure in politics, on the platform, or in the pulpit, but it's back in the home—the cradle of the nation—that woman lives longest, is happiest, and serves best.

Back of every great nation is the sure foundation of a consecrated home. And back of every home there is the wisdom and sacrifice and devotion of a woman's heart. A very fitting illustration is that given by Dr. George R. Stuart, of the story of the rooster from a neighboring barnyard who, visiting his friend, a brother rooster, presiding over the destiny and the activities of a neighboring barnyard, was amazed to find a nest full of half-hatched and dying chickens, and who, when he inquired of the brother rooster, "Where is the mother hen that belongs on this nest?" was informed by his sad friend, "She is down at the hen convention, speaking on the subject, 'How to successfully rear young chickens.'"

About eleven-tenths of the time the women who spend their time in the field discussing the problems of our national life, or lecturing on the means and methods of directing the affairs of a family, are the women—sad to say—who are, themselves, childless and often likewise homeless. In other words, if the women of America followed their example we could expect the nation to disappear with the passing of the present generation.

TALK SIX—PART TWO

"Verily she hath no son." II Kings 4:14.

Of homes, almost beyond numbering, in America today, the sentence could be written, "Verily

she hath no son"—or "Verily she hath no child." Not every home is a childless home from choice. Some of the sweetest mothers that God ever made are sometimes found amongst those who are destined to go down to the grave with empty arms, never to hear the cry—the angelic cry—from baby lips, and never feel the silken, tender touch of baby hands.

Those who do not love babies—men or women—have something wrong with their heads, their hearts, and their souls, provided they have a soul. The most precious thing in all this world—ugly though it be—and the identical picture of its father though it be—is a delicate, tender, sweet-smelling, fluffy wad of human flesh, from ten days old up till ten months old! Whoever deliberately and cold-bloodedly builds against the cry of a baby or the shout of a child, provided there is health in that home, and ordinary comforts in that home, is not only a monstrosity amongst human beings, but is a criminal.

The home from which children are deliberately barred is not a home, but is a blighted heath upon which the curses of Almighty God must eternally rest. Whoever assumes the solemn, binding vows of the marriage relation assumes vows that cannot be deliberately ignored or cold-bloodedly evaded—vows that have their culmination or fruition in the wonders and glories of motherhood and of parenthood. What a tragedy when one sees strong, able-bodied women, who have been commanded of God to replenish the earth, riding

about the streets with a big, ugly, brindle-nosed dog, or an over-sized, bewhiskered weenie of some canine specie, riding on the seat by their side: and this while lining the streets there are hundreds of children who never rode in a Ford, much less a fine big automobile.

It's an insult to every conception of motherhood when women degenerate to the low level where they deliberately choose to repudiate motherhood, to lavish their surplus affections on a pug-ugly bull dog, an empty-headed parrot, or a purring house-cat; to say nothing about the insult and degradation and humiliation which the dog, or cat, or parrot is subjected to who must substitute for a baby and be forced into the receiving line of all this mush and gush.

Personally, I am fond of dogs, but, pardon the expression when I say, "Dog-gone it, the place for a dog is not in a woman's arms or on the front seat of an automobile." Women who insist in driving about the streets with an over-grown dog riding on the seat by their sides must realize that they are placing themselves in the rather awkward light of making people think that they are probably taking some of their husband's kin-folks out for an airing. In saying this I mean no reflection on the dog.

If fate has decreed that any wife is not to have children of her own then she should be made to realize that there are hundreds of orphan children, and children that are worse than orphan, to whom a ride in an automobile would not only be a

visit to the new Jerusalem, but, if adopted and given half the care and affection which some women bestow on a flea-bitten dog or an empty-headed parrot, they would blossom into wonderful womanhood or manhood, to honor God, serve their fellows, and render credit to the woman who gave them their chance.

When one looks out upon this great tide of pleasure-seeking, gadding, gossiping, drifting, dancing, painting, gum-chewing, childless "matrons," his one outstanding rainbow, to this dark storm-cloud in the national life is the fact that this breed disappears with the dying off of the present generation. Fortunately, possibly, they are not bearing children, and therefore in that sense do not curse the world by perpetuating their kind.

Only a short while ago the dailies carried the usual nauseating, sickening courtroom testimony which involved a prominent couple in the east, in which the court proceedings and divorce decree involved the three-year-old child of the warring couple. In the midst of the court proceedings the judge was amazed when the three-year-old child took a vanity case from her pocket and deliberately began using a lip-stick and powder-rag, with whatever additional embellishments or adornments that go with the ordinary "fixed" face. The judge was right—he not only publicly reprimanded the parents, but argued the child would be a thousand times better off if taken away from both parents and placed in a home for orphan

children. People of that type are not fit to run with the dogs, much less train dogs or touch childhood; and this is the storm-cloud that threatens America today.

Ignorance, vice, and unrestrained lust are populating the nation, while in the homes of the well-educated and comfortably-situated the voice of children is scarcely if ever heard. There is a Christian patriotism—high, holy, and distinct—which builds intelligently toward large families, well-educated, well-trained, and well-disciplined.

There is such a thing as legalized adultery—legalized in the eyes of men, but not in the eyes of God. Whoever enters the holy temple of the marriage relation must not defile that temple. And whoever accepts the privileges of the marriage vows, to cold-bloodedly bar from the heart and home the cry of childhood, is all but certain to pass beneath the curses of a just God, finally to be banished from His presence forever.

TALK SIX—PART THREE

“And the woman conceived, and bare a son.”
II Kings, 4:17.

This is the day of the brute. This is the day in which the average boy has every incentive that would lead to the abnormal development of his lowest nature. Procreation spells out life or

spells out death, just as these God-given faculties are used or abused.

Love is unselfishly productive, and yet always wisely restrained. Where love reigns supreme lust dies! Where love is triumphant children are born, and born the objects of design, care, and prayer. Where love is, reason is, and where reason is, the passions of the brute are subjugated or annihilated. Women do not look at the solemn obligations of the marriage relations from the same viewpoint, or with the same objective, as that from which men look, and just as it is true that women, as a class, have a higher and clearer vision in spiritual things they also have a higher, clearer, cleaner, and more noble conception of marriage and its attendant relationships.

Women, as a rule, are not dominated by lust, and in assuming the holy vows of matrimony the average girl who has been reared in refined, cultured, and pure environments never permits her mind to travel the low plane of that which centers back in sex relationship. This does not mean that such girls shrink from the responsibilities of wifedom and motherhood, but it does mean that their conceptions of those sacred relationships are flung on such high levels that that which becomes the outflow of mere animal indulgence never enters their thought.

And just here Satan has flung about these issues a certain mock modesty through which multitudes have been plunged into unutterable tragedy. This mock modesty should be stripped from these ques-

tions and flung into the limbo of oblivion, and the issues that are bound up in the vital relationships of love, marriage, wifehood, and motherhood should be plainly and cleanly and constructively discussed.

Multitudes of young wives, as delicate and as beautiful as flowers, have turned from the marriage altars to pass through experiences of shock and grief and shame about which they could not speak even to their dearest friends. Multitudes have found when too late that instead of connecting themselves for life with a clean-minded, clean-bodied, self-controlled lover, whose conception of marriage was high, clean, and beautiful, they had chained themselves for life to a common brute degenerate, whose highest conception of the marriage relation was that of a channel through which to indulge or satisfy the instincts and passions of the brute.

Sex relationships spell out life or death. Love, when abused and defiled, can become a terribly destructive thing. Only recently I learned of a wonderful woman whose confession was that from the first night of her marriage relations her passionate love for the man to whom she had given herself in the holy bonds of matrimony was turned into intense hate, and that while she continued to endure the chains that bound her an unhappy slave to the brute-dominated husband, nothing but love for her children and the fear of God kept her in a situation that was worse than death.

Outside the fact of the anguish of mind and terror of heart, through which multitudes of pure-minded, modest, refined wives pass, there is the further fact that through an over-indulgence in sex relationships multitudes of men and women are prematurely aged and prematurely broken in mind, body, and spirit. There is such a thing possible as legalized adultery, and there is such a thing as the abuse of that which may appear to be perfectly legitimate, when the inevitable consequences of such abuse is premature decay.

The marriage relation carries with it solemn, holy obligations which cannot be avoided or evaded without incurring the eternal condemnation of a just and holy God. At the same time God does not require unreasonable or impossible things. God permitting, and health permitting, the great woman of today will have her children—not her child—but her children—happy, well educated well trained, healthy children. Our children have a right to demand that they be rightly born, and after birth they have a right to demand that they be given wholesome, healthful environment, and the love and training of godly, consistent fathers and mothers. It is pitiable, unutterably so, that in so many homes after one child is born the door of the home is closed, whether deliberately so or not, against the entrance of any further children into the household.

In the average home, where there is only one child, that child is usually peevish, sickly, and so rotten that it is a burden to itself and a burden

to its parents. God never intended that such conditions should be general throughout any set or circle in the world's history, and the farther humanity wanders from God's schedule or God's plan the farther old humanity strays from hope, happiness, and the ideal home life. Multitudes of homes today are little short of hells on earth because God's ideal of love, wifehood, and motherhood, where lust dies and love reigns triumphant, has been changed, repudiated, or ignored.

TALK SIX—PART FOUR

"And he said to his servant, carry him to his mother." II Kings, 4:19.

Side by side with the fascinating story of the mother of Moses and the pathetic, beautiful story of the mother of Samuel, we should stand the striking, gripping story of the Shunammite woman.

The mother of Moses—"God Thy Glory"—in the intricate work of making the basket of bulrushes to be daubed within and without until the basket became a little ark, bearing its precious freight, with the story of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, as she worked and wept over the clothes which were to wrap about the child of her prayer, and of her tender devotion, find their counterpart and their fuller expression in the tender solicitation, loss, and triumphs of this Shunammite woman.

This mother—of whom God said, “A Great Woman”—doubtless lined and relined the ark in which her son was to ride upon life’s tempestuous sea—preparing the ark with all the prayer and care that a great womanhood could command, daring to dream of that day when her grown and accomplished son would stand amongst his fellows to honor God and bless the world. Then came that dreadful dark day when beneath the pitiless blast of the hot, oriental sun the boy had fallen to the ground, crying, “My head!” (And incidentally, it might be said in passing, here is the first case of the sunstroke on record.)

From the field where, following the men at their work, he had been struck to the ground, the unconscious boy was hastened to the home and to the mother’s arms. In the arms of the wonderful mother the child lay to breath his last. We need not undertake to express what must have been the emotions and the grief of that mother when the realization came that her only son was dead—dead!

And just here is a fact that is worthy of more than passing note. From the prophet’s chamber—the room of prayer—the child had come—had come as beautiful fruit from the tree that was dead! With a holy and a majestic calm this woman, with this precious, breathless lump of clay, now turns back toward the prophet’s chamber—the extra room which had been built and dedicated to God’s servant by an unselfish, praying, godly woman. Then came the orders to the

servants to saddle the beasts, with the further orders, "Drive, and go forward; slacken me not the riding except I bid thee," and the additional declaration need not be recorded here, that it was toward the man of God she rode.

In the days of her health and of her prosperity she had stood true to God, playing the game fairly, squarely, and unselfishly. And now, in the time of her deep sorrow and unspeakable grief, she felt it was her right and her privilege to command God and to expect a ready and a definite response. It was in answer—and in part as a reward for the thoughtfulness of this great woman—that the child had been given the first time as from the dead, and the conviction evidently gripped this woman that the same God who miraculously had spoken this child into the mother's arms could once again work the miracle of resurrection from the dead.

Reaching the man of God she flung herself at his feet, and when the question had come, "Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?" she had answered, "It is well."

Yes, thank God, it is well, today, tomorrow, and forever, for every great woman who has been true in all the sacred relationships of life, and who has been unfailingly loyal in her devotion to God and to his Christ! Even though the fairest and dearest of the household lies dead in our midst it is ours to remember that the assurances of our dear loving Heavenly Father is that "All

things work together for good to them that love God." And had this Shunammite woman never been privileged to hold that wonderful little boy—thrilling, throbbing, and glowing with life—in her arms again, it would have been hers to say, "It is well."

In a Southern home the family physician had left the bedside of a dying babe. The fight was lost. The father was in another room, giving vent to his tears. The mother's heart and the mother's love, was not yet conquered. Kneeling at the bedside where the little babe lay the mother was crying, "Spare, spare, spare, oh God, spare my darling babe." In the midst of her agonizing prayer she became conscious that some one had entered the room. Looking up she looked directly across the bed and into the face of her first-born son. The boy stood, swaying over the bedside and mumbling in his drunken stupor.

The mother did not know that her son drank, and as she looked up into the face of her drunken boy her blood almost froze at the horror and the shock of it. The mother forgot that her little babe was dying and forgot even that she had a babe, and from the cry, "Spare, spare, spare," she changed her cry to "Save, save, save, oh God, save my poor drunken boy." As awful as the declaration may sound, our children had better be dead in the love, rest, and protection of the love of God, than to be alive in vice, immorality, and crime.

Back of every great man is the love of a great

mother, and how wonderully beautiful and clean and significant is the cry, "Blessed are the paps that gave thee suck" and this declaration, referring directly to the mother of Jesus, might be applied with some significance at least to every great mother who gives to the world a noble son or daughter.

What a privilege, and what a responsibility, oh mothers of America, to take these children—children possessed of immortal spirits—children who will write history, either in letters of gold or letters of black, to mould, guide, and make them! The child learns to walk guided by the mother's hand, and learns to talk guided by the mother's lips, and just as the flower drinks in the sunshine and the rain, so these children drink in a mother's love, to reproduce in many essential ways the mother's life and the mother's likeness.

TALK NUMBER SEVEN

PART ONE

"A Great Woman." II Kings 4-8.



ANY sermons have been preached on the declaration, "There was no room for Him in the inn," and many tears have been shed over the fact that when the King of glory made His entrance into this world, the best the world had to offer Him was a manger.

Centuries have slipped by and millions of homes throughout Christendom pass as Christian homes, but in how many of these homes to-day do you really suppose Jesus Christ has a part or place?

A pastor of a great church, with nearly three thousand members, said to me, "Of all the beautiful homes owned by the members of this great church, there is not one that is so dedicated to God that I would feel free to send a bishop, missionary, evangelist, or pastor there—when these men visit me I must either take them into my house or send them to the hotel." "My father's house was the preacher's home," is often the declaration of the younger generations today, and these words are tantamount to, "But my home is not."

This wonderful woman of Shunem perceived that Elisha was an holy man of God, and she reasoned correctly that to make provision for this homeless wanderer was to honor God,

honor God's servant, and reap the attendant blessings that God has ever showered upon those who even do so lowly a service as the giving of a cup of water.

Today, however, sad to say, missionaries, pastors, bishops, teachers—with whatever other workers the church or the mission field may be blessed—can pass our homes, and do pass our homes, to pass right on to a boarding house, hotel, or wagon yard, so far as we are concerned. This fact is traceable to an appalling indifference on the part of the average Christian home regarding the entertainment of the servant of God, or else is traceable to a situation which prevails in the average professed Christian home which would make it exceedingly embarrassing to have a man of God about the house.

The story is told of a devout minister who, chancing to spend the night in a certain home, and who, in amazement, asked for the privilege of having family worship when he saw the family was about to retire without prayer, was further amazed when the old house cat lying before the fireplace sat up and began blinking its eyes with curious interest as the old minister began reading. When the lesson was ended and the large family at the suggestion of the minister, began the act of kneeling, the cat—figuratively speaking—was “out of the bag,” and after tearing frantically about the room, upsetting and scattering the movable things that chanced to be in its way, the door was finally

opened and the cat made its escape—after which, amidst more or less interruption, the preacher managed to offer his prayer.

I remember on a certain occasion I was called to visit the wife of a church official, who was seriously ill, and that before the prayer was offered in that home the wife requested the husband to go get the son, who was playing somewhere in the yard. The boy, probably four years of age—a typical bucking broncho of an American youngster—began eyeing me with suspicion as soon as I began reading the Word of God.

When the lesson was ended and we knelt for prayer, the trouble started. In the disturbance which the boy made in his attempt to break away from the father, the father evidently decided the wise thing to do was to turn him loose. Deliberately the child walked around behind my chair and got down to peek through the opening between the slats in the big arm chair, and when I opened my eyes he was watching me as intently and with as much curiosity as he would have gazed upon the first camel or the first elephant in a menagerie. When I arose to leave the room, the boy turned to his father with “Daddy, what made that man get down on his knees and talk to that chair?”

No man can begin to measure the inspiration and blessing which lingers behind to enoble a home and to bless the children of the home, which follows the sojourn—whether long or short—of these mighty men of God who enter

our homes as God's servants and our honored guests.

One of our distinguished evangelists, while preaching in a northern city, was lamenting the fact that so few beautiful homes today were Christian homes and that while many of these homes became the center of worldiness, and often godlessness, Jesus Christ was shut out. Near the front sat the wife of a banker, a very wealthy woman, whose beautiful home had a ballroom but no altar and no Prophet's chamber. Like a flash the revelation came of the insult and the hypocrisy of one claiming to be a Christian when one's religion was little more than an extra garment to be worn in God's house on the Holy Day. She was very deliberate in everything she did, and while my friend was preaching she bowed her head and said, "Oh, Christ, as long as I have a home there shall be one home in this city dedicated to Thy worship, and a home in which there shall be a Prophet's chamber and a place of prayer." At the close of the service she informed the evangelist of what she had done and asked him to dedicate her home. Immediately following this dedication she drew into her home the young men of the city who were away from home and turned her home into a Bible study center and a place of Christian fellowship.

The work which this woman started was so blessed of God that other women in adjoining towns took up the work, and this movement, I am told, has spread into adjoining states.

TALK SEVEN—PART TWO

"That I may run to the man of God." II Kings, 4:22.

If I were asked what woman of Bible history, next to the mother of our Lord, is most alive in the world today, I would say the Shunammite woman. By one of many acts she immortalized herself and set in motion influence that will live while eternity lasts.

We are speaking now especially of the Prophet's chamber which she founded, and which has been carried through hundreds of thousands of homes throughout Christendom, and down through all ages. In this sacred, holy place God's servants—preachers, teachers, evangelists, and missionaries—have wept, prayed, slept, and rested, to go out to spiritual conquests of which they never dreamed.

The average Christian home of the centuries past was characterized and sanctified by the family altar and the Prophet's chamber, and to these homes God's servant, whatever his faith, was always welcome, and in these homes God's servant was housed, fed, inspired and blessed. Within my memory there have been towns and cities in the southland where, if a homeless servant of God had been compelled to go to a boarding house or hotel, the entire community would have felt disgraced.

This day has passed. The old-fashioned Christian home, set apart and dedicated to the work and worship of God, has just about ceased to exist. In many professed Christian homes to-day the family altar has been taken out to make room for the jazz dance; the Bible has been taken from the center table to make room for the card party; the church hymnal, with its sacred ennobling songs, has been taken from the instrument of music to make a place for sentimental, gushing trash which demoralizes and degrades both singer and listener.

Every home becomess a great fountain, pouring out a stream of life or death into the city, state, and national life. It was in the old-fashioned Christian home that the mighty spiritual giants of the church in all the ages past were housed and fed. It was out of these homes that children, came—impressed probably by these honored guests—to, in turn, preach and sing the gospel to a dying world.

I have entertained in my own home such men as Bishop Mat Hughs, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, Dr. R. A. Torrey, Dr. H. C. Morrison, Dr. James M. Gray, Abe Mulkey, Dr. W. B. Riley, etc., etc. No home can be so highly fortunate as to house these God-honored men and not retain some of the fragrance, inspiration, and blessing which naturally hovers over these holy men.

And let us not forget that it was the Shunammite woman—the woman of whom God said “A Great Woman”—who was directly responsible for this sacred institution called the Proph-

et's chamber, and that probably through the direct and indirect blessings that have gathered about these sacred centers, hundreds of thousands—if not literally millions—in the multiplying harvest of all the ages—have been or will be won to Jesus Christ.

The tragedy of Christian America today is that there are too few such homes. More, the storm cloud that threatens this republic centers back in the fact that apparently Satan has fused the combined agencies of perdition and is centralizing and focalizing his attack upon the home life. Many professed Christian homes today do not know what a real home life is.

To start up and down the streets of the average town or city, how many nice homes do you suppose you would find where the entire community knew that they were consecrated and dedicated homes—homes in which the old family prayer elevator made its trip daily to the throne of grace—and homes in which there was a Prophet's chamber, where the very walls probably were stained by the breath of prayer.

Our religion is a farce—a joke—a swindle—a tragedy—a humbug—an insult—if, while professing to be Christian, our homes are made the center of worldiness, frivolity, and foolishness. With multitudes in the church today religion is nothing more than an extra garment, to be worn to God's house on Sunday, or an extra frill, to be attached to a Sunday garment.

How many mothers today do you suppose have their children kneel, as the mothers of

long ago did, to say, "Now I lay me down to sleep," and how many do you suppose have their children gather about their knees, to tell them the stories of David bold, and Daniel brave, and of the babe in a manger, and of the Christ on the cross?

How may fathers do you suppose take time in the morning hour to read a portion from the Word of God and to commit the family, with its problems, temptations, and triumphs, to the care and keeping of the One who marks the sparrow's fall, clothes the lily of the valley, and numbers the hairs of our heads?

One of the greatest soul winners of the south tells the story of how his father's house was the preacher's home, and that when the old circuit rider came around on his periodical trips it was always the joy of his child heart to be permitted to take care of the circuit rider's horse. This mighty soul winner said, "I looked upon the old circuit rider and the horse he rode as creatures that had been let down out of heaven. I never fed a preacher's horse a 'nubbin' in my life," "but I always picked him out the biggest ears I could find."

Not only did this boy's father, a physician, have his family altar—with which nothing was ever allowed to interfere—but one morning that father prayed with such unusual unction and power, "That child as I was," testified this great soul winner, "when my father had finished praying I jumped up, ran out doors and search-

ed the skies. The way my father prayed I thought surely Jesus must be coming."

Fortunate is the child who is reared in a home where there are such sacred and holy examples and influences that the child goes out in the world thinking Godward, if not actually looking for some sign of Christ yonder in the cloud's.

TALK SEVEN—PART THREE

"Behold, yonder is the Shunammite." 11 Kings, 4:25.

The average girl today, while hopefully expectant she will some day have a home, strange to say, is making no preparation whatever to take care of such a home, once it is hers. The average girl, chasing a young man with a view to matrimony, is like a stub-tailed feist chasing a sixty-car freight train—in the name of everything reasonable and sensible and holy, what would either do with the object of their chase, should they be successful enough, or unsuccessful enough to catch it?

The big dream of every man's mind is the dream of a wife and a home. The two are inseparable. The average girl does not realize that the marriage relation, inevitably so, includes the making of a home, and she realizes even less that it requires as much thought, tact, perseverance,

courage and effort to build a home, as it does to build a bank, a mercantile business of a manufacturing industry.

The average American girl is not only glaringly inefficient but is also hopelessly ignorant regarding the first essentials of home making; and, sad to say, without realizing the tragedy of it, she often laughs and boasts of her ignorance. The average girl today could not turn a flapjack without wrapping it around the stove pipe, and she could not boil water without scorching it on all four sides! Her biscuits would either be too large to go into the oven or too hard to be opened with a can opener! Her conception of the necessary equipment in the culinary department is a can opener, some milk tickets, and a charge account at the bakery!

A young wife baked biscuits one morning for her husband, and they could not be broken. The only acceptable thing about them was that they were small, and the few the husband took he managed to slip into his pocket. What was left the wife threw out the back window, to be swallowed by the ducks as they passed on their way to the lake for the morning swim. When the ducks swam out on the water the last one of them sank!

"I must say these biscuits are good," said a young husband to his new wife. The boy's mother, who sat at the table, flashed her son a look that carried with it everything but commendation and affection. When they left the table, the mother

said "son I was ashamed of you when you told your wife that terrible lie. You know those biscuits were not good." "I didn't say they were good, mother; what I did say was, 'I MUST say they are good.'"

Biscuits and love are inseparable! Proper foods, correctly prepared, are probably the first essential in a happy home. The advice of the dear old mother who had lived with her husband fifty years, without friction, was probably the correct advice, when she said to the young girls seeking advice as to how to make a happy home, "Child, the first thing to do is to feed that brute." No man can feed long on canned goods, bake shop sweets, half-cooked potatoes and scorched meats and not have every variety of indigestion, dyspepsia, mullygrubs, and pip, which culminates in pains tearing through his internals that would ruin the disposition of a brass monkey. Consequently that bird called "love"—with its rather shy companion, called "the dove of peace"—are liable to find themselves sitting on a high roost with most of their feathers pulled out!

"Thank God," said the woman, when she dropped the plate which lay at her feet broken in a thousand pieces, "I will never have to wash and wipe you again." To be true, there is monotony in the eternal grind of making beds, washing dishes and sweeping floors, and there is also monotony in the eternal grind of office, shop, store, factory, and farm. If the time ever comes when it is a disgrace to make beds, sweep floors and wash dishes the time has also come when it

is a disgrace to operate a bank, manage a store, or follow the plow across the field.

Of course the average gum-chewing, painting, movie fan of today not only idealizes the hero of the movie—arguing that this man of her dreams gets five million dollars a year salary—but she also reads the *Cosmopolitan* magazine, and dares to believe that some day that bushy-haired, stalwart giant who rises in her imagination as the culmination of the so-called “inspiration” of picture and magazine will claim her for his own little bride; to carry her off to the great castle in which he lives. She visualizes herself lying in a hammock out beneath the great stately trees, sucking red lemonade through a wheat straw, while this stalwart giant—this sturdy oak with bushy hair—leans against the tree nearby, strumming the guitar and singing love songs, while a flock of servants serve, the beautiful limousine stands in the driveway nearby, and the whang-doodle doodles and the wood-chuck chucks!

Of course you need not tell that silly little dreamer that there just “ain’t no such animal,” and that she’d better get down out of her dream world and fit herself for what probably will be hers to gloriously realize; for, in all probability, like her fortunate mother, she will marry—if at all—just an ordinary, he-man, whose tendency is to corpulency, and who probably has just the reverse of silken, bushy locks, and who is inclined to doze at the fireside, baking his sock feet before the roaring fire, dreaming of that hour at four g. m. when the house is to once more be

astir, that the chores may be started, the cows milked and the calf trained to drink its morning allowance without bucking milk over the cupola on the horse barn.

Multitudes of mothers today would rise up to inform these indolent, street-gadding flappers and flapperettes, that they started life happy in a little home that was sanctified by hard labor, genuine sacrifice, and true devotion.

TALK SEVEN—PART FOUR

"So she went and came." II Kings, 4:25.

The appalling ignorance of the average American girl concerning the essentials of home making has led to a general stampede toward the hotel, boarding house, and apartment house.

Apartment houses are being built now with their heads sticking above the city streets—apartment houses in which the most attractive feature is found in the fact that reception hall, sitting room, parlor, dining, room, bed room, kitchen, and bath are all headed up in one room, and that one room covers a space just large enough for a medium-sized matron to hold conversation with her cat without getting her mouth full of hair.

In these apartment houses all the equipment is in the wall, and if the tendency today to centralize in one-room apartments, with whatever of so-called conveniences that go with these one-

room affairs, continues, the day is not far distant when, by one's touching a button at the hour of retiring, the bed will jump out in the middle of the room. On awakening from the night's slumber another button will be pushed and the kitchen range will slide out by the bedside—another button, and the range is lighted—another button, and the waffle irons drop on the fire—another button, and the pastry squirts out on the irons—another button, and the waffles slide across into the plate—another button, and the table with hot waffles slides across the bed—another button, and the head of the bed pushes up—another button, and a wet towel falls across the arm—and having foreseen this in the general trend of things one does not have to look very far into the future to realize that eventually the waffles will be cut and fed to the half-reclining occupant of the room who receives his or her breakfast only by chewing and swallowing.

The average crowd of girls today has evidently been impressed with the ease with which young robins receive their food from the mother robin as she sweeps here and there collecting the daily portion. Multitudes of girls lie in bed of mornings, and if they eat at all it is toward the noon-day hour, or else by the kindly offices, and mistaken love, of an overworked mother, who, like the mother robin, carries up food to poke down the throat of a lazy lout whose favorite song is, "Please go 'way and let me sleep."

Mothers who indulge their daughters so do not

realize that they are actually committing a crime against the daughter. The world has no place today for drones, parasites, or babies with bobbed hair and painted lips. The tragedy is that when this great big, overgrown, flabby, whimpering baby doll leaves her mother's roof and her mother's weakening, demoralizing care she finds that she has been unfitted, rather than fitted, for the stern realities of life.

My own wonderful little mother, three times a day, year in and year out, placed a warm meal on the table before her family. How she did it I do not know, but I do know she lived then and lives now and will always live in the lives of her children and of her children's children, down through many generations. I came out of the old school and from the old ideals of home making.

To this day I resent any attempt to stampede me through the kitchen, to grab a hand-out while sliding through. If there is nothing in the house but a bone to gnaw, believe in putting that bone on the table, at the stroke of the clock and after grace is said, I believe in sitting about the table to gnaw that bone.

System is just as necessary a part in the making of a home as it is necessary in school, bank, or manufacturing establishment, and the boy who marries a slip-shod, hit-or-miss, get-up-or-stay-in-bed, grab-your-lunch-from-the-kitchen-cabinet, disorganized, helter-skelter wife—a wife who, while at home, was petted and babied and cooed over and slobbered over by a sentimental, sickly, in-

dulgent mother, will find that he has a wife whose assets consist entirely of her liabilities.

Multitudes of girls today have been spoiled, and further they have a wrong conception regarding their value to the world. Girls have been made to believe that the world cannot get along without them, never realizing that when they ditch the program which God intended them, turning from motherhood and home making, they are just about as valuable as a peacock—the peacock as an object to gaze upon is probably one of the most beautiful creatures found in the world today, and it is probable that beyond that point it is the most absolutely worthless.

Boys today are very frank in insisting that they had rather “single hoof” it down the long, dusty lane of life than to be tied up to a fashion-model or hat-rack wife, whose highest conception of living is that of “eat, paint, and be merry.” In other words, the average boy today cannot figure out where the cost of the upkeep of a wife, if it simply means to put her up at a boarding house and feed her, can ever be made to pay reasonable dividends.

America today needs more real honest-to-goodness, one-hundred-per-cent, American, Christian homes, but she cannot have these homes without loyal, faithful, unselfish, sacrificing wives and mothers to preside over the destinies of these homes. The woman who gives to this nation a home—a dedicated, intelligently-directed, capably-managed, Christian home, and who, at the same

time, is loved and trusted by her husband, and idolized by her children, and who has the respect and confidence of the community round about, has climbed to levels that a queen might covet.

The one-room apartment house, with its ominous warning, "Children not allowed," is the storm cloud that threatens America today. The childless home or boarding house or apartment or hotel is a place where nothing lives but death, and where nothing dies except that which is already dead.

The Shunammite, of whom God said, "A great woman," was great through the fact that she built a home in which was the prophet's chamber, the love of a husband, the laughter of the child, and the smile of God.

TALK NUMBER EIGHT

PART ONE

"A Great Woman." II Kings, 4:8.

MANY years ago while in a revival campaign in a certain city I preached one night on the crime of the childless home. I warned my audience that the fact that today children were being barred from increasingly large numbers of homes—and that for no other reason than that selfishness so prompted—was the storm cloud that threatened America today.

At the conclusion of the sermon a prominent young society woman from one of the leading homes in the city came rushing to the front, weeping. For several years she had been the wife of a promising young business man, and though he desired a home of his own, and children to bless that home, she had labored under the conviction that for her, happiness was to be found, and found alone, in evading the responsibilities of home-making and of motherhood.

She had led in the most exclusive circles of society and was sought after, and literally enslaved, by those sets and those circles which head up in the homes of wealth, culture, and refinement. Despite her social successes, however, she had found that there was a cry in

her heart that the gayest hours or the gayest circles could not entirely silence. Her attempts to get away from the sacred, holy, and compulsory responsibilities that becomes the inevitable outflow of the marriage relation had well-nigh disrupted the happiness of her father's home, and, as she testified, had well-nigh wrecked her body and bankrupted her soul.

Her conversion or reclamation, with the beautiful transformations that followed, created, quite a stir in some of the clubs and social circles, and all this was added to when the announcement came, made by this young wife, that she was retiring absolutely from the gay rounds of a social butterfly, to devote her life to the making of a home and the rearing of a family. One year later I was privileged to sit at the table in the father's home, where the daughter and husband, yet lived, and to hear from the lips of this beautiful young wife, who was now a mother, the story of her reclamation and exaltation. "The past year," she said, "has been the most wonderful year of my life. Really, only now am I just beginning to live. Our home, which is to be our very own, is nearly completed, and my little babe, whom God has given us, has completed for us our circle of joy. Husband and I can hardly wait until we are settled in our own home, where we can begin to live as God intended us to live."

A little later, as we left the table and stood about the cradle where the baby lay, my own heart was thrilled as I looked into the radiantly beautiful face of that wonderful mother by the side of whom stood this clean-cut manly young husband, who was now realizing the big ideal about which he had dreamed but which had been unrealized in the several years of his married life. Standing so, I was swept anew with the realization that for this high purpose God made womanhood, and just to the extent that people strive to get away from God's ideals, to that extent do they involve themselves in mental, physical, moral, and spiritual disaster.

As a final chapter to this striking story, years later I was privileged to visit this home again, and everywhere about were marks of beauty, contentment, happiness, and fullness of life. The husband stands as one of the most successful men of his city, and over all is the radiance and glow of prosperity, unity, and love. Had not God come into the life of this young wife, to turn her back to the high purposes for which she was born, none can tell how much of sorrow, tragedy, and disaster might have been the inevitable outflow of her misdirected life.

Women may climb to the highest heights of professional and business life, or many achieve success as teachers, preachers, and legislators, but all these glories and all these seeming

triumphs pass into absolute insignificance when placed alongside the larger successes and the greater glories of the woman who builds a home, rears children, and honors God in the high and sacred relationships of wifehood, motherhood, and home-making. No matter how high the ideals which woman set before the world, nor how far-reaching and commendable the programs they seek to inaugurate, unless they are willing to die—to pass down into the valley of death—that out of that valley of death there shall come yet other lives—it doesn't take a prophet or a prophet's son to foresee the downfall or the decay of our nation.

The woman who responds to the cry of the mother heart within her, and who gives to the world stalwart, God-fearing, uncompromising sons and daughters, will demonstrate to the world that when her body passes back to dust the woman herself has really just begun to live. In the lives of her sons, and her son's sons, down through many generations, she will live—her wonderful influence ever widening, ever deepening, and ever sweeping out in greater blessing to the world.

The mother who has her children and who in the sober, serious secrets of her own best self can say "Thank God, God gave my children a mother who is strong and brave and pure and true"—a mother who can say, "Son, daughter, you follow your mother as your mother follows Christ"

—has achieved a success, or has climbed to such a pinnacle of holy living that angels might well afford to covet her influence or her place in the world.

Personally, I am convinced that it was of some such a woman as this that God said, "A great woman." That the Shunammite woman was great is apparent to all who make only a casual study of the few verses that gives to the world the story of this life, and for those who seek to dig deeper down there comes the conviction that this woman lived while she lived, and lives today, and will live while ceaseless ages roll!

TALK EIGHT—PART TWO

"Is it well with thee?" 11 Kings, 4:26.

The Shunammite woman lived in a day when the distracting, seductive, and demoralizing agencies and influences of this modern age did not exist. It is not hard to believe, however, that, had this great woman lived today, she would have been just as courageous, just as tactful, and just as faithful, and that she would have sent out of her home the same wholesome influence, and would have made out of her child the same godly son.

Truth, honor, love, loyalty, and virtue are just as strong today as ever they were, and while conditions may change, and people may change,

the potential facts of God, home, and righteousness are unchanging and unchangeable. While God lives and rules, virtue and truth must eventually reign triumphant over all.

When the prophet went to King Hezekiah, inquiring concerning certain men who had visited his kingdom, he asked, "What have these men seen in thine house?" And to this question the king answered, "All the things that are in my house have they seen." Few mothers stop to realize that it isn't always true that it is the influences of the streets that possess the greatest power to hurt and harm the child, but that sometimes between the walls of our own homes, and in the agencies that we never stop to suspect, there may lie the poison of death.

In every home there are voices—quiet, insistent, persistent voices that speak loudest, clearest, and most insistently, speaking into the very mind and heart and soul and blood of the child life, culminating—slowly probably, but surely certainly—in moulding that life, sometimes for good and sometimes for evil. Every home has a distinct personality or individuality—every home has its atmosphere, and one who is wise in judging regarding the inner soul of the home life of any family, can almost intuitively and immediately sense, diagnose, and tabulate just what the general standards and the general ideals of that home are.

In the making or the unmaking of the child life the silent voices or the voices apart from

human flesh are often the voices that speak loudest, clearest, and most insistently. Amongst these voices are the pictures on the walls, the music on the piano and victrola, the books on the shelf, the papers and the magazines on the reading stand. This is a day of jazz. Jazz pictures! Jazz music! Jazz literature! Jazz conversation!

Some homes are characterized by disorder, discord, division, bickering, and strife. Some homes are characterized by unity, harmony, orderliness, quiteness, courtesy, contentment, and peace. Out of the one home will come children who will bear many of the marks of disorder, division, and confusion that reign triumphant there, while out of the other home will probably come children bearing all the marks that go with a well-ordered, well-kept, God-honoring home, where Jesus Christ, in sincerity, was made head of the house, "the unseen Guest at every meal," and "a silent Listener to every conversation."

Englishmen are proud to hang the picture of Queen Victoria somewhere on the walls of their homes, and the average Frenchman likewise displays the picture of Napoleon, while the picture of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, Theodore Roosevelt, or Woodrow Wilson hangs on the wall of the average American home.

Why should not God's people, whose citizenship is in Heaven, have somewhere about the home that type of picture which will testify to their citizenship? What a tragedy that an angel from Heaven, visiting some professed Christian homes,

might judge from the pictures on the walls, the literature on the reading stand, and the music on the piano, that probably the people living in these homes had never heard of Jesus Christ or that they actually having heard, were unbelievers and infidels!

Only recently in a western city a very successful middle-aged business man asked me the question, "Is there such a thing as a really old-fashioned happy home in this day and age? I have been looking for such a home for the past two years and I have not found it." "A pessimist!" you will say; but is it not true that some strange influence with diabolical power is centering a fight on the fireside of the American home, and isn't it true that we are actually in danger of losing that rich heritage that has been handed down from generation to generation—that heritage which is best expressed and best preserved by the ideals of the old-fashioned Christian home?

I heard a Christian worker reading a letter which she had received from a lady friend in a certain city, a paragraph of which struck me most forcibly. "There are so many calls from outside my home, insistent calls, that to answer half of them I must neglect my family, and thus I lose my family. To respond to all the demands of my house means that I lose my friends, and so I am in a strait betwixt two."

The heartbreaking, appalling fact of this age is that multitudes of mothers are turning a deaf ear to the call of their children, and, in answering

the many demands which the world makes upon them are alienating their children, neglecting their homes, and losing the wonders and the glories of a home life which alone can build happiness, contentment, and conserve the influences that build the city, state, or nation. Every mother who reads these lines would make a wise investment if she turned a deaf ear to every call and every demand that would take her away from her home and away from her children to spend a few days at least in invoicing her own mind and heart, in then invoicing her own home, and then invoicing the ideals or the lack of ideals found in the mind and hearts of her children.

If the nation is saved, it will be saved alone through the sacred, holy influences which pour out of consecrated, godly homes, and if the nation is lost it will be lost at last through the fact that the home life was wrecked, the home ideals dissipated, and the children left to the mercies of whatever influences or whatever agencies chance happens to fling them into.

TALK EIGHT—PART THREE

"Is is well with thy husband?" 11 Kings, 4:26.

The average wife has it in her power to bless or curse, to make or break, her husband. The three agencies that do most to disrupt the American home are envy, jealousy, and indolence.

Few people stop to realize how tremendously potent for evil is that driving, deadening, and terribly destructive thing called envy. Some women feel, whatever the cost, they must live as their neighbors live; or, more often still, they want their diamonds to be larger, their homes better, their houses more costly, their clothes to be just a little more attractive.

In a western city recently there came the shock of the revelation of defalcation on the part of one of the most trusted and most popular bank employees of that city. When the case came to trial it developed that the young man had married the society beauty of the city—a young woman whose parents had indulged her every whim and caprice—and, as an inevitable result, almost from the first day of their marriage relation this woman had made demands upon him that his salary would not meet. A new high-priced car, a beautiful fur coat, many diamonds, and many parties,—and then the end. The young wife is back with her parents, and the young man whom she cursed is behind the bars of the penitentiary for five long years.

It isn't the high cost of living today that brings disaster into multitudes of homes, but it is the cost of high living.

Side by side with envy—that all-consuming envy that drives people to all sorts of hurtful extremes in trying to ape the pace-setters—there stands that peace-killing, home-destroying monster called jealousy. In fact, in many instances

envy and jealousy run through life hand in hand, and probably, in a great many instances, destruction of the home is traceable to the teamwork of these two. And just here my many years of public life, dealing as I do with all sorts of situations, have brought some surprising revelations. Only recently in a certain city a grieved and grieving wife tormented the life out of me regarding her husband and the suspicions and jealousies which had nearly disrupted their home, and of course, according to her tale to me, she was many times more innocent than a new-born babe.

Before that meeting was done, however, there were some developments which have since culminated in substantiating every suspicion the husband had had regarding his weak, if not actually wicked, companion.

It's almost a safe venture that whenever a husband begins to confide in every friendly ear or listening ear the so-called sad jealousies and suspicions of his wife regarding his relations with other people, or whenever any wife gets especially confidential with others, telling of the jealousies and suspicions of her husband, regarding her attitude toward men, you are listening to a husband or wife whose troubled conscience and imprudent conduct are driving him or her thus to seek for consolation or comfort from friends.

True husbands or true wives, if wrongly accused or wrongly condemned or wrongly suspected, will suffer under such deep shame and humilia-

tion that they would literally die before permitting a soul to know that their loyalty and their faithfulness could ever be questioned by the one with whom they lived their life.

There are tragedies in some lives about which these people could not talk, even to their dearest friends, and the very fact that husbands or wives go peddling the infelicities or suspicions of their own homes to certain friends, or to the world is surest evidence that there is something at least very unsavory in Denmark.

A mother who loves her children, or a father who loves his home, faces every day the fearful realization that any suspicion resting upon a parent may bear a fearful curse to the children and even the children's children who come out of or descend from that home. A woman would be a million times less than human and would be undeserving the name of "Mother" if she were not jealous of the good name of her home and of her children. That wife and mother knows that through the weakness or wickedness of her husband her children may be sent out in the world bearing the marks which will mar their happiness and their usefulness, in a measure at least, forever; and she knows also that the very women who would urge her husband into sinful living, just as men know that the very men who would lead a woman to trifle with her honor and her good name, are the very women and the very men who would make a joke of the weak fools after

they had led them away from virtue, honesty, integrity, home, and God.

The third agency of the trio of evils which probably do most to disrupt the American home is that of indolence, and it's probable that indolence generates in a large measure both envy and jealousy. In a certain city recently a young business man married one of the prominent young society girls of the city and took her to a beautiful little home, attractively furnished and located in the most desirable part of the city. After three months the neighborhood was shocked to learn that the young man had moved to a room in a hotel and was suing for divorce. At the trial the facts came out that from the first day of his married life that woman had never arisen to prepare his morning meal, but that she had had to get a lunch at a down town eating house, and that often when he had returned at noon he found his wife still in bed, rolled up with a novel or with some magazines piled around her.

When the question was asked the Shunammite woman, "Is it well with thy husband?" the answer was, "It is well." And well it is, now and forever more, to the husband who has the high and honored privilege of having as his life companion—his sweetheart, his wife, and the mother of his children—a woman who envies no one, who is jealous only of her own good name and the good name of her husband and children, and who is ready, unselfishly so, to give her time, her talent,

and her efforts to the making of a real Christian home.

TALK EIGHT—PART FOUR

"Is it well with the child?" II Kings, 4:26.

A daughter at school was wired that her mother was dying. On reaching home she was met at the station with the information that her mother was dead. To the amazement of the loved ones and friends who bore the sad news to her, the girl expressed no emotion whatever. While riding home, as the first words she uttered, she finally said, "My mother dead? My precious mother is not dead." On reaching her home she was taken to her room and there for hours she sat, over and over repeating the words, "My mother dead? My precious mother is not dead," and seemingly it was hours afterward before the child began to realize the terrible loss which she had sustained.

In closing this last message of my series on "A Great Woman," I feel that it is perfectly fitting, and a natural culmination to the series, to bring to my readers the question which Elisha sent by his servant to the Shunammite woman—"Is it well with the child?"

Multitudes of wonderful young folk in America today—sons and daughters—are dead. They are dead to God, and Christ, and the church, and

honor, and purity, and truthfulness, and service, and the fact that makes this first fact more appalling still is the realization that multitudes of these young people are dead probably through the criminal neglect or inexcusable indifference of the ones who gave them birth. Some of these days, please God, parents will be brought to realize that children do not become what their parents teach them to become, but they do become what their parents are. It is the silent, subtle, all-powerful—something, called influence, that moulds the life of the child, makes or unmakes his character, and decides his destiny.

In a certain city a mother came to me with the sad confession that through certain missteps in her earlier life, she had involved herself in a course of wrongdoing from which she had never been able to get complete deliverance. Out of the shame and bitterness of her own tragic life she had resolved, at whatever cost, to save her children. She had kept her family altar, had sought to be regular in attendance at church, and had made a tremendous fight to keep her children in the services of the church and under the influence of godly people. The sad confession to me was that despite all her efforts her children had landed on the rocks and that repeated tragedy had disrupted her home and wrecked her family. The facts were apparent. The children had not become what the mother was teaching them to become but they had become what the mother was. Only great mothers—great in their devotion, sacri-

fice, loyalty, and purity—can produce great sons and great daughters.

Suzanna Wesley, with her nineteen children, apparently had plenty of time to read the Bible, train and clothe her children, and provide for the necessities of her home. She not only became the mother of John and Charles Wesley, but she also became the mother of Methodism. Only live mothers can produce children that live, and when mothers are dead—dead to the higher, holier, and more beautiful things of life—the inevitable harvest will be a generation of children who are likewise dead.

Mothers should awaken to a realization of the fact that if their children are without proper conceptions and definite convictions concerning their obligations to God and to the world, they are dead. Mothers should be awakened to the realization of the fact that if their children are without high ideals and lofty ambitions, they are dead. Mothers should be awakened to the realization of the fact that if their children are idolent, self-centered, and inconsiderate of the happiness of others, they are dead. Mothers should be awakened to a realization of the fact that if their children are careless about their associations, indifferent as to their environments, and blind to the opportunities that are theirs, they are dead.

To be true, it is an awful responsibility to bring children into this world, where there is so much of misery and woe and shame and crime and degradation and death, but on the other hand only

God can realize the high privilege and the honor and the distinction and glory of motherhood, with all that motherhood implies.

It was this Shunammite woman—a woman without name but a woman of undying fame—of whom God said, “A great woman,” to whom the question came, “Is it well with the child?” And though the child in question, the idol of the mother’s heart, lay dead, the answer come back, “It is well.” There are a million things worse than physical death, and if a mother has lived her life and trained her child to die, rather than to stoop or compromise or stain the soul with a lie, though her child lie dead, the death of the body becomes an insignificant thing compared to the imperishable and ever-living realities of God, Christ, honor, and eternal hope which have been built into the life of the child.

As this last message of this series of messages goes out to tens of thousands of mothers who shall probably read these lines with the closing challenge, “Is it well with the child?” we wonder how many mothers can answer back, in glad, joyous, happy assurance, “It is well.” And I pray God it may be well—well, now and forever more—for every mother who reads these lines and for every mother’s son and daughter that comes from homes into which these messages go. Well now! Well tomorrow! Well forever more!

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